

# Desolate Era

(莽荒纪)

Book 25

Novessence Thunder

I Eat Tomatoes

(我吃西红柿)

Story Description:

Fate had never been kind to Ji Ning. Wracked by illnesses and infirm his entire life on Earth, Ning knew early on that he would die as a teenager. What he didn't know was that there really was such a thing as life after death, and that the multiverse was a far larger place than he thought. A lucky twist of fate (one of the few in Ning's life) meant that Ning was reborn into a world of Immortals and monsters, of Ki Refiners and powerful Fiendgods, a world where Dynasties lasted for millions of years. A world which is both greater...and yet also smaller...than he ever could imagine. He would have the opportunity to join them, and in this life, Ning swore to himself, he would never let himself be weak again! The Era he was born into was a Desolate one, but Ning would make it his era.

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

# Chapter 1: Daolord Solesky

Atop a large ship that was advancing through the emptiness of space.

“Sit.” The raggedy old man sat down in the lotus position, a table in front of him. The table was covered with fruit and wine, and Ji Ning sat down in front of the old man.

“Oh, right. I haven’t introduced myself yet.” The raggedy old man smiled. “I’m one of the three Palace Lords of Vastheaven Palace, ‘Daolord Solesky’.”

“Three Palace Lords?” Ning was surprised.

The information which World God Northrest had left behind indicated that Vastheaven Palace only had two Palace Lords.

“All members of Vastheaven Palace address each other as ‘brother’. There’s no difference in status amongst us,” the raggedy old man explained. “Anyone who can become a Samsara Daolord will be honored with the title of ‘Palace Lord’. A short while ago, Vastheaven Palace gave birth to a new Samsara Daolord.”

Ning was secretly amazed.

This was truly incredible. Their organization had a total of three Daolords! Vastheaven Palace truly was a thriving, powerful place.

“Earlier, you said that it was Northrest who gave you the talisman of welcome. How exactly did Northrest die?” A hint of a baleful aura began to gather around the raggedy old Daolord Solesky. The members of Vastheaven Palace showed extreme solidarity, especially since it was extremely hard to join Vastheaven Palace in the first place. Every single member of the Palace was extremely talented. World God Northrest was on the same level of power as God Emperor Blacklotus, and strictly speaking he was actually a bit more powerful. This was because World God Northrest had trained in the [Nameless] sword-art. When using it alongside Violetjewel, he was somewhat stronger than even Blacklotus had been.

"He was slain by the three Wujiao Godbeasts," Ning said.

"Them?" A cold light flashed through Daolord Solesky's eyes, then he closed them and began to spread out his senses.

Daolord Solesky looked just like an ordinary old beggar, but when he closed his eyes, a wave of invisible power swept out from him that caused even Ning to feel a sense of uncontrollable veneration towards the man. Prior to this, Daolord Solesky had kept his aura completely suppressed, so as to ensure that Ning wouldn't feel any pressure from his presence at all. Now, however...Ning felt the pressure.

A short while later, Daolord Solesky opened his eyes and nodded. "I've already sent word to Vastheaven Palace. Both Warlord and I engaged in a bit of divination. Those three Wujiao Godbeasts truly were the slayers of Northrest."

Ning couldn't help but secretly sigh in amazement.

Divination?

Ning himself had some insights into the workings of fate, and was capable of seeing the destinies of ordinary mortals and weak cultivators. Thus, he knew exactly what Daolord Solesky meant! To use the power of divination to calculate and identify the killer of Northrest was extremely difficult, because there were many different streams of variables which interfered with the workings of fate.

However, once they knew that the killers were the three Wujiao Godbeasts, things were different. They were able to use divination to calculate the actions of both Northrest and the three Wujiao Godbeasts, making it millions of times easier to come to the correct conclusion. Still, few World-level experts would be capable of such a thing.

"Those three vile creatures truly were audacious. How dare they scheme against one of our brothers?" Daolord Solesky's eyes flashed with cold light. "I really wonder where the hell they got their courage from. Six of our brothers from Vastheaven Palace have already set out after them. Soon, those three vile creatures will die."

Ning couldn't help but secretly sigh for the three Wujiao Godbeasts.

To plot against a member of Vastheaven Palace was no easy feat. The slightest misstep would spell certain doom.

All those years ago, the three Wujiao Godbeasts had successfully ambushed World God Northrest, acquiring the treasures they wanted and forcing him to flee while heavily injured. Despite their 'success', they risked their own lives as they furiously chased after him, diving deep into many dangerous areas! They did this precisely because they actually were filled with tremendous terror regarding the possibility of Vastheaven Palace finding out what they had done. If that happened...given how powerful Vastheaven Palace was, they would be easily wiped out.

In the Vastheaven Territory, Vastheaven Palace was the undisputed hegemon.

All of its members were extremely formidable, and some of their most powerful members transcended even supreme World Gods in might. They were even stronger than Northrest had been! Just one of those figures would be able to easily slay all three of them. Even 'ordinary' members of Vastheaven Palace would be more powerful than the three Godbeasts; if several 'ordinary' members were sent out, they would have no chance at all of surviving.

In the end, World God Northrest was forced to flee into such a lethal death trap that even his Eternal weapon was half-shattered! Only then was he able to throw the three Wujiao Godbeasts off his trail. Thankfully, the quintessence core of his Eternal weapon was extremely powerful, allowing the remnants of his truesoul to hide within it. Alas, in the end, he was unable to reverse or stop the process of his truesoul breaking apart.

"Eh? Why is my lifeblood oath still active?" Ning frowned slightly.

He had sworn a lifeblood oath to go to Vastheaven Palace and inform its Welcomer of Northrest's death within a chaos cycle.

He had now notified Daolord Solesky, which meant that word had surely been spread to all the members of Vastheaven Palace. In fact, several of the brothers had already struck out for revenge. By all rights, the

Welcomer should have been informed as well.

“Gah!”

“Right.” Ning immediately understood what was going on.

The exact wording of his lifeblood oath had been: “I swear on my very life itself that within a thousand years of becoming an Elder God, I must leave the Three Realms. I must reach ‘Vastheaven Palace’ within a chaos cycle and inform a Welcomer of Vastheaven Palace that World God Northrest was slain by the three Wujiao Godbeasts.”

The wording of his lifeblood oath specified that he had to physically reach Vastheaven Palace within a chaos cycle. This was part of his oath.

“It seems that the lifeblood oath will only dissipate after I actually reach Vastheaven Palace,” Ning mused to himself. “Eh. I’m going there anyways. No rush.”

“Ji Ning.” Daolord Solesky suddenly spoke out.

“Palace Lord,” Ning said.

“Just call me big brother Solesky,” Daolord Solesky said with a laugh. “In Vastheaven Palace, people on the same level simply refer to each other as ‘brother’. If someone is a level higher than you, you should just refer to them as ‘big brother’.”

“Big brother Solesky.” Ning nodded.

“Ji Ning, I spent quite a bit of time rushing all the way from the Vastheaven Territory to the Badlands Territory because there are two places in the Badlands Territory I must visit,” Daolord Solesky said.

“Two places in the Badlands Territory?” Ning listened attentively.

“The first place is the Windsource Ruins,” Daolord Solesky said. “I was headed over there, but halfway there I sensed your talisman of welcome. However, I could also sense fate whispering to me that you weren’t in too much danger, so I took my time and wasn’t in a rush to go find you. Alas... if I had known what was happening, I would’ve travelled to you at maximum speed. Perhaps I might’ve been able to save that ‘World God

Blackmist' fellow."

Ning couldn't help but sigh as well.

He couldn't really blame Daolord Solesky. Daolord Solesky had only really been focused on Ning's survival, after all; when he sensed that his brother Ning wasn't in too much danger, he naturally didn't feel the need to rush over.

"This ship is heading straight for the Windsouce Ruins." Daolord Solesky looked at Ning. "The Windsouce Ruins were established by Daolord Windsouce. Daolord Windsouce was an absolutely incredible figure. He was every bit my equal and he very nearly succeeded in his Daomerge. The protective spells and formations he left behind to guard his estate are quite troublesome. I really don't want to risk them, but I have to."

Ning could tell that apparently Daolord Solesky was just as strong as Daolord Windsouce had been.

"Before he died, he laid out all of his insights into the 'Hundred Streams of the Windsouce,'" Daolord Solesky said. "Once that formation is activated, it'll cause the entire Windsouce Chaosworld to completely blow apart. It will be as strong as a full-strength desperation blow from Daolord Windsouce!"

"Fortunately, I don't need to actually break his formation on this trip. All I need to do is enter the core region and acquire a certain treasure," Daolord Solesky said. "Despite that, it'll still be dangerous. If you are going with me...I recommend you either stay in my estate-world or wait for me outside the Windsouce Ruins."

Ning said hurriedly, "Big brother Solesky, is there a relatively safe location inside the Ruins that you can take me to?"

He had dared to adventure through the Ruins by himself. Now that he had a Daolord by his side, what did he have to fear?

"I knew it." Daolord Solesky rather admired Ning's adventurous spirit. "That place is divided into an outer region, an inner region, and a core

region. I'm headed to the core region. If you come with me, I'll find a relatively safe place inside the core region for you and set up a perimeter for you. No matter what, you are not permitted to leave that area!"

"Understood." Ning nodded.

No kidding. The core region was the most terrifying place in the entire Windsource Ruins. If he ran about randomly within it, he would essentially be treating his own life as a joke.

"Good." Daolord Solesky nodded.

Just two hours later, Daolord Solesky and Ning arrived at the Windsource Chaosworld.

Ning couldn't help but sigh. Samsara Daolords travelled much more quickly than Ning himself could...and this was supposedly a slow, leisurely pace for Daolord Solesky. He would probably move much faster when time really mattered.

"The Windsource Ruins are right over there. I actually went there before, once. Ning pointed at a wide region covered by fogs.

"The Ruins..." Daolord Solesky stood there in the sky, staring downwards at the vast Windsource Ruins. A rather complicated look was on his face. He sighed, "He made it to the very last step. All he needed to do was complete his final step and merge his Hundred Streams into the Dao...but in the end, he failed. Knowing that he was about to die and his Dao was about to vanish, he decided to leave these Ruins behind to let people in the future know that a person named Windsource once existed."

"Big brother?" Ning looked towards Daolord Solesky.

"Ahahah! My Daomerge is coming. Recently, I've developed a habit of thinking about all sorts of random things." Daolord Solesky shook his head and laughed. "I'm much luckier than Windsource was, and my Dao is stronger than his was as well. Ahaha! Come, come! Follow me inside."

Whoosh.

Daolord Solesky immediately led Ning to charge downwards into the

clouds below.

# Chapter 2: Ki Island

Within the Windsource Ruins.

Daolord Solesky and Ji Ning stood in the air, the area around them filled with streams of gray energy.

“Uhh...” Daolord Solesky stared at the streams of gray energy swirling in the skies. Every single stream of energy came out of great crevices within the earth, intermingled with the other streams of gray energy in the air, then plunged back down into a different crevice.

“Interesting. Daolord Windsorce was quite a legend, and it seems he had the power to match his reputation.” Daolord Solesky stared at the many criss-crossing streams of gray energy in the skies. “A pity that my path is completely different from his. Otherwise, I’d burrow into the ground and spend some time getting a clear look of the Hundred Streams of the Windsorce.”

Ning just stood next to him, not understanding any of this. It had been one of those streams of gray energy that had pulled him into one of the deep abysses.

“Big brother.” Ning pointed towards a pool of water below them, then said, “When I last entered the Windsorce Ruins, I accidentally encountered a little house by that lake. The house held a deceased World God and a tower-shaped Eternal treasure he had.”

“An Eternal treasure?” Daolord Solesky glanced downwards, two streams of golden light shooting out of his eyes.

“No, nothing there. There’s no house.” Daolord Solesky shook his head. “The Hundred Streams of the Windsorce are constantly changing. The house you encountered last time could well be ten million kilometers away by now.”

Daolord Solesky wouldn’t mind taking away an Eternal weapon if there was no effort involved, but alas it wasn’t there.

“Let’s go.” Daolord Solesky shook his head. “When Daolord Windsorce

died, many of his World Gods died with him, but only four or five of them held Eternal weapons. All of them are scattered throughout the Ruins, and I'm not able to break apart the formation protecting this place. All I can do is try my luck, but I could spend thousands of years without finding one of the Eternal weapons."

Ning agreed with this analysis.

Daolord Solesky himself had said earlier that when the Hundred Streams of the Windsource Formation unleashed its full might, it would be tremendously powerful. Quite a few Daolords, such as Daolord Waterwind or Daolord Badlands, had visited this place before, but all of them acted with great caution. None of them tried to actually breach the formation! This was a formation which Daolord Windsource had poured all of his heart, soul, power, and Dao into as he lay on the verge of death. When the formation was activated, it would possess as much power as Daolord Windsource himself did when engaging in a last-ditch final attack.

"I wouldn't be afraid of fighting Daolord Windsource himself, but..." Daolord Solesky laughed. "Because he was dying, he poured everything he had into this formation. I don't want to take on an explosive, full-strength from the thing."

"Let's go to the core regions."

Daolord Solesky led Ning as they continued to fly forwards.

He didn't try to breach the formation or bypass it. Instead he followed its natural flows, resulting in them slowly moving closer and closer towards the core regions.

Whoooosh. Before them were countless gusts of gray wind. The further they advanced, the more powerful the wind was and the more gusts of them appeared.

Ning stood by Daolord Solesky's side, but he still couldn't help but feel nervous.

He could sense that if he was by himself here, he would be completely ground apart into tiny pieces.

"These are all some of Windsource's killer techniques, but those powerful enough can easily go through them without harm. In fact, they'll actually form a giant corridor." Daolord Solesky laughed as he led them through the gray wind.

Before them were a series of islands.

"We are now in a core region," Daolord Solesky said.

"It is so beautiful here." Ning saw a large lake that was thousands of kilometers long. In the center of the lake was a single large island surrounded by more than ten smaller islands.

"Don't be fooled by appearances. This place is extremely dangerous." Two streams of golden light shot out from Daolord Solesky's eyes as he surveyed the region. "The island in the center is the place where Daolord Windsorce used to live. The surrounding islands should be places where his disciples and servants lived."

"Oh?" Ning swept the area with his gaze.

Every single island emanated ripples of energy.

Some emanated ripples of electric.

Some emanated ripples of frost.

Some emanated ripples of a bloody aura.

One island had an aura of sword-ki at its center that soared into the heavens.

As for the central island where Daolord Windsorce had lived, that island emanated multiple rings of ripples. It was as though this island was generating a omnidirectional wind that gently rippled out in waves. In fact, when the wind reached them Daolord Solesky didn't move to block it, allowing it to gently blow across them. The feeling was quite comfortable.

However, for some reason, whenever Ning looked at the central island his heart was filled with a sense of fear. "That old bastard." Daolord Solesky stared intently at the central island, his eyes glowing with golden light as he mumbled to himself, "He died, but he wanted to make sure that

it wouldn't be easy for others to acquire his treasures without paying a price."

"I won't be able to take you inside, and I won't be able to protect you once I go inside." Daolord Solesky glanced at Ning. "There are quite a few islands around the big one. Just pick one."

Ning felt a surge of joy. He actually didn't want to go to the central island. It was too dangerous! If he went inside, he would probably die without even realizing what was happening.

"Alright." Ning glanced at the small islands before turning to focus on the one which was emanating a towering aura of sword energy. "That one, I suppose."

Ning knew that all of the World-level experts here had died, which meant that the treasures they had left behind were all ownerless. Ownerless treasures would naturally emanate ripples of tremendous power...and a treasure which emanated such towering ripples of sword energy was bound to be an extraordinary one.

"That one?" Daolord Solesky turned his golden gaze towards that island. That island had an Immortal estate built atop it, and it was from this place that the sword-ki was emanating.

"Ji Ning, you should have the Eternal weapon which Northrest owned, right?" Daolord Solesky looked at Ning.

"Yes." Ning nodded.

"Mm. When I saw you defend against those black lotuses, I could sense that you were quite strong. That's why I suspected that you were probably using his 'Violetjewel'." Daolord Solesky nodded. "Since you have Violetjewel...although that island is filled with danger, you should be able to handle it."

"Filled with danger?" Ning was secretly surprised.

"Go. That island holds three deceased World-level experts." Daolord Solesky laughed. "The treasures they left behind aren't bad. They are a good fit for you."

"Three?" Ning nodded.

"Remember. No matter what, don't move as much as a single step off of that island." Daolord Solesky said solemnly, "If you touch or activate part of the formations here, you'll instantly be reduced to dust. I won't have any chance to save you."

"I understand." Ning nodded.

"Then go." Daolord Solesky waved his hand, causing a stream of watery light to immediately surround Ning and send him flying towards the small island at high speed.

Whooooosh.

Ning landed atop a grassy patch of land. He hurriedly raised his head to stare at the skies, where he saw Daolord Solesky smile and nod towards him. "Just wait here for me on this island." Daolord Solesky then immediately transformed into a formless stream of water that flew straight towards the large central island.

The ripples of gentle wind surrounding transformed into ripples of incredibly sharp golden wind that could cut through anything. However, that stream of water was durable and formless; even after being chopped apart, it seeped through the wind and reformed, easily bypassing the barrier and entering the central island.

When Ning saw Daolord Solesky transform into a stream of water and sensed the terrifying power of the golden wind emanating from the central island, he was once more reminded of the huge gap in power that existed between him and them. They were on completely different levels.

"I'm still very weak." Ning turned his head to look at the island he was on.

The island he was on was a few dozen kilometers in size.

The island was filled with beautiful flowers and lovely trees, as well as a few small hills. The Immortal estate was located at the very center and was quite dazzling to behold.

“Is that where the three World-level experts are?”

“Big brother Solesky told me that although this place is filled with danger, I can handle it.” Ning stretched out his hand, causing Violetjewel to appear within it. The azureflower mist energy began to fill his body as well, further strengthening it.

Ning carefully walked forward, arriving before the Immortal estate within a few seconds.

The doors to the palace were open. It was completely silent.

“Eh?”

As Ning cautiously advanced through the estate, he could sense how deathly still the entire place was. At the same time, the hallways were all extremely clean and tidy.

“Nobody here at all?” As Ning walked forward, he saw that the entire place was completely empty. There weren’t even any corpses to be seen. Ning tested out using his coresense and heartforce to scan the place, but the entire region hummed with a gentle wind that blocked out everything. Daolord Solesky was able to scan the place, but clearly Ning was far too weak to do so.

“Eh?” Just as Ning was wondering why there was nobody to be seen here, his eyes suddenly lit up.

Ning saw a small mountain off in the distance located just outside the walls of the palace. Midway up the mountain, there was a little pavilion, and there was a golden-robed figure seated in the lotus position within the pavilion.

# Chapter 3: Stone Titan

"I never would've thought that the first World-level expert would actually be located outside of the estate." Ji Ning hopped over the wall, then walked up the mountain. The golden-robed figure seated within the distant pavilion looked as though he was alive. He had a long beard, a peaceful face, and emanated faint ripples of a Chaos Immortal's energy. However, no signs of actual life could be seen.

"The sword energy emanating from this island doesn't come from him." Ning turned to glance backwards at the Immortal estate. The sword energy was emanating from deep within the immortal estate itself. Ning had spent some time wandering it, but had been careful to stay in the outer regions of the estate. He hadn't gone deeper inside of it yet.

If even someone like Daolord Solesky described this place as being 'filled with danger', how could Ning possibly dare to take it lightly?

"Senior." Ning walked to the pavilion, then clasped his hands as he stood outside of it. "I'll take the treasures you left behind, but I'll also give you a proper burial to ensure that you won't be disturbed again."

Just as his words finished...

Rumble. An aura of power suddenly burst forth.

Ning's face changed. He hurriedly retreated at high speed, then turned to stare at the place where the aura was coming from. There were many boulders on this mountain, and an enormous boulder was located right next to the pavilion. Ning hadn't paid it too much attention, but this boulder was now emanating an aura of power that vastly outstripped Ning himself. In fact, Ning had the feeling that it was even more powerful than most World-level experts.

Whoosh. The boulder melted into liquid, then reformed anew, transforming to an enormous stone titan. The stone titan had dark yellow eyes and his entire body was formed from stone, and he was staring straight at Ning.

“A golem?” Ning carefully reached out with his senses. Although this stone titan had an aura of tremendous power, it didn’t have an aura of life; all it had was an aura of energy. It was a construct or a magic treasure of some sort.

“An Elder God?” The stone titan’s voice rumbled. “Puny Elder God. It is good that you chose to show respect to your seniors. If you dared to desecrate my master’s corpse, I would’ve smashed you into a thousand pieces already.”

Ning immediately understood. This stone titan had to be some sort of construct which the deceased Chaos Immortal had created long ago. The Chaos Immortal hadn’t chosen to destroy the golem; instead, he had allowed the golem to stay by his corpse’s side and guard him for all these years.

“So this senior was your master?” Ning said with curiosity, “I imagine you must’ve been trapped on this island for a long, long time. Don’t you want to leave?”

“What do you care?” The stone titan looked at Ning. “You wish to bamboozle me into accepting you as my new master?”

Ning smiled, but in his heart he felt rather embarrassed. This golem wasn’t created through a grafted soul and instead had an artificial golem spirit, but it was quite intelligent.

Generally speaking, intelligent beings who were by themselves for a long period of time would want to leave a place like this. For example, the treasure-spirit of the Eternal-level tower which Ning had encountered in the house by the lake wished to leave the Ruins. Ning could tell that this powerful golem, which had an aura that was mightier than that of most World-level experts, was extremely tough to deal with. Wouldn’t it be nice if Ning could convince the golem to join him and accept him as its new master?

But alas, Ning was mistaken.

This golem was fashioned from a type of marvelous ore, and the golem spirit that had emerged from it had a stony personality as well. The golem

enjoyed peace and quiet and was perfectly happy with staying in one place without moving for countless years on end. He had taken the shape of a giant boulder and guarded its master's corpse for countless years without fail. If Ning hadn't come, he would've continued to remain in that form.

"Yes, I wish you to accept me as your master." Ning nodded and smiled. "You should be a World-level golem. To leave you here is a complete waste of your power."

"You were quite respectful to my master, so I'll give you a chance." The stone titan nodded. "Since you are just a puny little Elder God, I won't make it too hard for you. If you can withstand three of my palm-strokes, I'll accept you as my new master."

The stone titan still remembered the final words of his master.

His master had known that death was nigh. Before dying, he had said, "After I die, if there are any outsiders who come and act with great respect and propriety, you may follow him after testing him and verifying that he is strong. But if any would act to defile my corpse, slay them! If you cannot slay them, dive into the lake. If they dare to follow you into the lake, they shall surely perish."

There were some cultivators who would ransack and defile the corpses of deceased seniors. Any of those who came here would be in trouble!

"Understood." Ning nodded.

"These three palms of mine won't be too powerful, but there aren't many Elder Gods who can withstand them. Weak Elder Gods aren't qualified to be my master. Be careful!" The stone titan looked at Ning. Ning was an Elder God, which was why the stone titan was only going to strike three times. If Ning was a World-level expert, the golem would be fighting with full power.

"Come." Ning nodded.

Whoosh.

The stone titan suddenly struck out with his enormous, pillar-like arms. His arms stretched out to become many dozens of meters long as his giant

palms came crashing down towards Ning!

“Fast!” Ning was secretly startled. He unleashed his flexible sword, causing it to transform into a black hole that immediately entangled the stone palm.

Boom!

Ning took one step backwards.

Actually, Ning was doing this on purpose. With the azureflower mist energy strengthening him, his body was as tough as any World God’s body. He easily could’ve stood there without needing to take a step back at all. However, Ning was afraid that this might rouse the golem’s fighting spirit, resulting in the next two palms becoming much more powerful. Taming this golem was what really mattered right now; after he became the golem’s master, there would be plenty of time for the two of them to spar. A World-level golem was far more valuable than most Dao weapons; if any danger appeared, Ning could allow the golem to stand in front and protect him.

“So you have a bit of power.” The stone titan let out a growl. “Try out my second palm!”

Whoosh!

The stone palm easily broke past the speed of light as it instantly appeared before Ning. It was clearly much faster than the previous blow, and as the giant stone palm appeared Ning felt as though the entire world was growing dark.

Boom!! Yet another massive explosion rang out from the collision.

This time, Ning took three steps backwards.

“Eh?” The stone titan frowned at this, and a ‘frown’ appearing on a giant stone face was actually quite an amusing sight. The stone titan had thought that this palm of his would smash the Elder God and send him flying all the way back to the walls of the Immortal palace...but instead, the Elder God had only taken three steps back. Clearly, the man was holding back some of his true power.

“Final palm!” The stone titan let out a growl, sending his palm down towards Ning in an even more brutal strike. This palm-strike was so fierce that space itself was being crushed in on itself and came slamming towards Ning as well.

“Let’s do this!” This time, Ning used his Eternal weapon Violetjewel. He unleashed his most powerful strike!

Boom! It was time for the ‘Heavenbreaker’ stance. Ning lifted Violetjewel up high, transforming it to become three hundred meters long, then chopped down furiously towards the stone titan. It was already the third palm, and so Ning felt that it was time to show the stone titan his real power. He wanted to show the stone titan that he was not a ‘puny Elder God’!

“Eh!?” The stone titan was caught off-guard. The power of the blow which Ning had just unleashed caused him to feel shocked. His palm had been crashing downwards towards Ning, but now he hurriedly angled it upwards to block Ning’s attack instead.

BOOM!!!

A head-on, frontal collision.

The sword-light smashed directly downwards against the giant stone palm, causing the stone titan to sink downwards into the ground. Even the mountain itself trembled slightly. However, this island had been constructed by Daolord Windsource; World-level experts would often spar in these islands but were unable to truly damage it in the slightest.

As for Ning, he was driven quite a few steps backwards by the shockwave generated through this exchange of blows.

“What tremendous power. I caught him off-guard and he only used one hand to block, but he was still able to knock me backwards. In raw strength alone, he vastly surpasses me,” Ning mused to himself.

“I’ve received all three of your palm-strokes,” Ning said.

The stone titan stared at Ning. Puzzled, he asked, “You...you ARE an Elder God, right?”

"Can't you tell from the aura?" Ning grinned.

"But your power...I feel as though you are comparable to some of the World Gods I've met in the past." The stone titan stared at Ning, feeling quite curious. "There are legends of some Elder Gods who can defeat World Gods. I think you should be able to defeat some of the weakest World Gods...but don't get smug. I treated you as an Elder God and so I didn't strike with full force. Otherwise, I would've smacked you flying with a single hit. I was afraid if I hit you too hard, I'd send you flying off the island and get you killed by the formations."

Ning laughed.

He had noticed earlier that the attacks of the stone titan had all come from the same direction. From this direction, even if Ning had been sent flying, he would've merely smashed against the Immortal palace. But of course, if he was hit too hard, it was still possible that he would've bounced off the Immortal palace and been knocked off the island regardless.

"Do you remember what you promised just now?" Ning said.

"My previous master was a master of formations." The stone titan glanced at the golden-robed figure within the pavilion. "I didn't expect that my new master would be an Elder God with the power of a World God." He opened his mouth, causing a fist-sized globe that was covered with countless divine runes to fly towards Ning, coming to a halt before him.

Ning immediately recognized it. This was the life-core of a golem which contained its formation-diagram. This was the core of the entire golem; upon binding it, he would become capable of controlling it.

# Chapter 4: Twelve Disciples

Ji Ning's Elder God energy flew out, surrounding the life-core and quickly binding it.

After binding it, Ning could sense the intimate connection that now existed between him and the golem. The golem was now completely under his control.

"A World-level golem. This is far rarer than a Dao weapon." Ning was in an excellent mood.

"Master." The stone titan now had a much friendlier look in his eyes as he looked at Ning.

"Right. What's your name?" Ning asked.

"My previous master just called me Rocky," the stone titan said honestly.

Ning blinked. A World-level golem was actually named 'Rocky'?

"Alright, I'll keep calling you Rocky as well." Ning nodded, then turned towards the golden-robed corpse. Ning waved his hand, causing the golden-robed corpse and the stone titan to disappear.

Within Ning's estate world. This was a place filled with endless mountain ranges.

Ning had sent one of his divine power incarnations to accompany the stone titan in travelling through this place.

"When I encounter certain deceased Immortals and Fiendgods in my travels, I'll generally bury them here." Ning pointed at a distant mountain which held a graveyard filled with many tombstone, each tombstone quite large.

"Open up." Ning pointed at a verdant mountain in front of them. Rumble...the mountain began to split apart. Moments later, the golden-robed corpse flew into the mountain crevice. The mountain then reformed, a new tombstone appearing at its very peak.

"What was your previous master's name?" Ning asked.

“Chaos Immortal Origination,” the stone titan rumbled.

Ning nodded. A total of seven words immediately appeared on the surface of the tombstone: “The burial site of Chaos Immortal Origination.” The stone titan stared at the lush mountain for a moment, then rumbled softly, “Let us leave, Master.”

The pavilion on the mountain in the outside world.

“Immortal Origination didn’t have any Dao armor?” Ning began to bind Immortal Origination’s treasures and carefully sift through them.

“Immortal Origination placed all of his time and energy into his golems. He never engaged in close combat against foes,” the stone titan said. “His most important treasures were the ‘Ninehearts Heavenloop Formation’ and a domain-type artifact known as the ‘Rainbow Cloud World’. Both can be considered top-grade Dao weapons.”

After finishing his inspections, Ning was quite excited by what he had just found. He now possessed an enormous number of chaos jewels! Immortal Origination had stored up roughly fifty cubes worth of chaos jewels.

“The Ninehearts Heavenloop Formation was his most powerful formation. Once he used it, no enemy would dare to move close to him. Once they entered the sphere of the formation, it would be almost impossible for them to break free from it. It was completely up to him whether or not he wished to keep fighting or to flee,” the stone titan said. “However, the formation is an incredibly complicated one. Only someone with incredible talent in the art of formations is capable of using it.”

Ning waved his hand, causing the nine loops to appear before him. Every single loop was filled with countless divine runes that were much more complicated than even the formation-diagram located in the stone titan’s core.

The stone titan had been personally created by Immortal Origination. This Ninehearts Heavenloop Formation, however, was a Dao weapon that had been fashioned by a Samsara Daolord. It was naturally much more profound.

"It is too complicated. I can't use it." Ning shook his head then waved his hand again, causing a pearl to appear within it. This pearl was brimming with a strange mist that swirled around it. Ning smiled. "This is better for me. Domain-type Dao weapons are quite rare."

Although Immortal Origination didn't have many treasures, the ones he did have were all exquisite.

The Ninehearts Heavenloop Formation was a set of nine loops that were worth more than a hundred cubes of chaos nectar.

The stone titan Rocky was also worth more than a hundred cubes.

The Rainbow Cloud World was a domain-type treasure that was incredibly rare and worth more than fifty cubes.

And then there was the enormous amount of chaos jewels!

"Immortal Origination really had a lot of chaos jewels." Ning let out a sigh.

"He focused on the art of formations and the art of constructs. He naturally had to prepare many chaos jewels to keep them powered," the stone titan said.

"Help protect me for a time. I need to spend a bit of time in cultivation," Ning said.

"Yes, Master." The stone titan nodded.

Whoosh.

The Heavengazer Tower of Radiance appeared next to him. Ning stepped into the tower.

Within the tower.

Ning sat down in the lotus position. He waved his hand, causing thousands of chaos jewels to appear, all of them brimming with power.

"I can't let all these chaos jewels go to waste. My protective divine ability isn't really cutting it any longer. If I just slowly train it on its own, even if I use the Heavengazer Tower it'll take me tens of thousands of years to

master it," Ning mused to himself. "Since I've gained such a great fortune, I might as well be a bit extravagant and break through my current bottleneck."

Ning had already mastered the upper portion of the [Golden Idol] when he was in the Three Realms, resulting in a divine body that was comparable to a top-grade Protocosmic treasure.

Ning had been working on the middle portion of the [Golden Idol] ever since he had become an Elder God.

This divine ability was actually a very simple one. All it needed was energy. Divine power, Immortal energy, chaos energy, spirit-pills...it accepted all types of energy. Ning had started with complete mastery over the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] and so was able to use its energy to easily master the upper portion. The middle portion, however, was much more complicated...but it allowed for the cultivator to make his body comparable to a top-grade Chaos treasure. The amount of energy it required was correspondingly great as well!

If Ning continued to simply train slowly, he would need roughly a million years before he was able to master this technique. Even when using the Heavengazer Tower to save time, he would still need tens of thousands of years. Ning had indeed been preparing to spend that time slowly cultivating, because if he wanted to rely on the energy of chaos jewels or chaos nectar he would need to spend dozens of cubes worth of energy. This price was far too high! Even most World Gods would rather spend twenty or thirty thousand years cultivating rather than pay such an enormous price.

Chaos jewels and chaos nectar were used like currency in the Endless Territories.

Chaos nectar's advantage lay in its quality! It was incredibly marvelous and could be used in many ways. Many divine abilities, secret arts, pill-making techniques, and protective spells needed it.

Chaos jewels' advantage lay in energy quantity! They were jewels that were naturally formed through a crystallization of chaos energy, which

meant that every single chaos jewel held an enormous amount of chaos energy within it. Powerful formations and powerful golems all required chaos jewels to be used as their energy sources. Chaos jewels had many uses as well.

"I need to break through this bottleneck as quickly as I can. If I do so, I'll stand a better chance of surviving any future dangers. Although big brother Solesky said that I should be able to handle the dangers here, nothing is absolute. Best to be safe."

Ning waved his hand, causing a chaos jewel to fly into his palm.

Ning then sat there in the lotus position, drawing out an enormous amount of chaos energy into his body from the chaos jewel. His divine body began to transform, and Ning's skin began to emanate a faint golden light...

Two days later.

After having used up nineteen chaos jewels, Ning opened his eyes.

"Mm. My body has broken through to the Chaos treasure level. I'll pause here for now. When I go to the outside world and have some more free time, I'll finish the process." Ning had spent hundreds of years slowly drawing in energy, resulting in him reaching a bottleneck. Within the Heavengazer Tower, he was able to cause time to flow fifty times faster than in the outside world, resulting in his body eventually breaking through to the Chaos level. Although this used up quite a bit of energy, Ning wasn't worried about the cost in chaos jewels.

Whoosh.

Ning appeared within the pavilion once more.

"Master." The stone titan looked at Ning.

"Rocky, there should have been two other World-level experts on this island, right?" Ning asked.

"Yes." The stone titan pointed at the other distant islands. "There are twelve islands surrounding Daolord Windsource's residence. These islands

housed his twelve disciples as well as some servants.”

“Twelve disciples?” Ning was startled. “What of this island?”

“The three World-level experts who resided on this island were World God Cavecry, Chaos Immortal Bloodpool, and Chaos Immortal Origination. World God Cavecry was the Daolord’s disciple while Immortal Origination and Immortal Bloodpool were responsible for serving World God Cavecry,” the stone titan said. “World God Cavecry was far more powerful than Immortal Origination and Immortal Bloodpool.”

Ning’s curiosity had been aroused. “World God Cavecry was Daolord Windsourse’s disciple. Was he ordered to accompany his master into death as well?”

“The disciples who were summoned here were all the ones he didn’t really like. The Daolord was a strange man with a strange personality. If he didn’t acknowledge and respect you, you would die with him,” the stone titan said. “However, Daolord Windsourse still bestowed a painting upon World God Cavecry. I still remember what the Daolord said to him when giving him the painting. ‘If you can comprehend and master this painting, you’ll be given your freedom and allowed to leave.’ Alas, World God Cavecry didn’t manage to master it before his death.”

“Oh.” Ning nodded.

“Actually, Daolord Windsourse gave all twelve of these disciples a chance to live. The problem was that he gave them extremely harsh tests that were far too difficult for them. I don’t think any of the twelve managed to live,” the stone titan said.

# Chapter 5: The Underground Hallway

The stone titan said hurriedly, “These twelve disciples were not favored by the Daolord and weren’t acknowledged by him. However, although the Daolord had a rather strange temperament, he would still work hard to cultivate and rear powerful subordinates. Thus, the stronger ones were all expelled and driven away once the Daolord returned to his home. The ones who were required to follow him to this place were the ones who didn’t have much potential.”

“Didn’t have much potential?” Ning immediately asked, “Did World God Cavecry have an Eternal weapon?”

“He did not.” The stone titan shook his head.

Ning felt a bit of disappointment. When he had heard that the lord of this island was World God Cavecry, who had two Chaos Immortals serving him, he had thought that Cavecry had to be a truly incredible figure. Who would’ve thought that he didn’t have so much as a single Eternal weapon?

“Eternal weapons are extremely valuable. Not even Daolords can just toss them around casually, and the Daolord preferred for his disciples to adventure for their treasures rather than just wait for him to hand them out,” the stone titan said. “Based on what I know, only nine of the Daolord’s disciples had Eternal weapons. Most of them acquired them on their own. The Daolord doted dearly on his first disciple and his second disciple, and he only bestowed Eternal weapons upon the two of them.”

“None of the twelve disciples who accompanied him in death had Eternal weapons.”

“However, quite a few of his hundreds of slaves had Eternal weapons. They had acquired those weapons by chance as they had accompanied the Daolord in his adventures,” the stone titan said.

Ning nodded slowly.

“Don’t feel disappointed, Master.” The stone titan said hurriedly, “As I

recall, before World God Cavecry died he would often spend his time staring at that painting. My master said that painting is equal to an Eternal weapon in value.”

“Painting?” Ning suddenly remembered that Daolord Windsource had bestowed a painting upon World God Cavecry, promising to release him if Cavecry was able to comprehend it.

Alas...World God Cavecry was unable to do so.

“Are you familiar with the palace?” Ning pointed at the Immortal estate before them.

“Of course. Follow me, Master,” the stone titan said.

The stone titan shrank down to a size of three meters, then walked down the mountain alongside Ning and entered the palace.

“Master, you must be careful. World God Cavecry was a cruel, narrow-minded, vicious man who was exceedingly selfish,” the stone titan warned. “Even though he knew he was going to die, he still didn’t wish for others to be able to acquire his treasures. His extreme selfishness was the true reason why Daolord Windsource disliked him. Early on, he improved incredibly fast as a cultivator, and so the Daolord held high hopes for him. However, later on he stopped improving. Given how selfish he was...the Daolord ended up choosing him to be one of the twelve to accompany him in death.”

Ning nodded as he gripped Violetjewel carefully in his hand.

“He spent most of his time within the underground study, focusing on the painting,” the stone titan said. “Daolord Windsource’s death came suddenly. As a result, World God Cavecry died in that underground study, and his corpse remains there.”

When Daolord Windsource died, his twelve disciples and many servants all died as well.

The servants and disciples all knew that his death was impending, but none of them knew exactly when it would occur. There was of course no way that Daolord Windsource himself could send them a mental message

warning them that he was about to die.

Rumble...

The stone titan led the way, pushing aside a stone wall in a practiced manner and revealing a stairway leading downwards.

The stone titan walked in front while Ning walked behind him. The two advanced down the stairway.

It was fortunate for Ning that the stone titan was very familiar with the Immortal estate. Otherwise, given how he couldn't even scan the place with coresense or heartforce, it would've been extremely difficult for Ning to locate the door behind that wall.

"Careful, Master. We are now very close to that private study. There might be danger," the stone titan said as they advanced through the dark hallway.

"Right." Ning remained on high alert.

The underground hallway was extremely dark, with just the divine runes etched into the sides of the corridor providing a dim amount of flickering light.

The stone titan and Ning continued their advance.

"Come here, Master!" When they reached a turn, the stone titan suddenly sent a mental message to Ning. At a time like this, the stone titan was quite cautious as well.

Ning silently moved to stand next to the stone titan and peered down the hallway.

A figure in blood-colored robes was seated on the ground, slumped against the walls.

"That was Immortal Bloodpool." The stone titan sent mentally to Ning, "Immortal Bloodpool was probably walking through this hallway when his truesoul was suddenly extinguished, which is why he is half-sitting, half-slumping."

"Right." Ning felt a bit of eagerness.

Immortal Origination had quite a few treasures on him. What did Immortal Bloodpool have?

"Let me take a look first, Master." The stone giant stepped forwards. As a golem, his task was to charge forward and absorb the blows as the vanguard. His body was comparable to a Dao weapon in strength; he would be able to withstand even a blow from most Samsara Daolords! His ability to stay alive was far greater than that of almost any World-level expert.

Only when the stone titan was unable to discover any danger around Immortal Bloodpool's corpse did Ning step forward as well.

Immortal Bloodpool was quite handsome, but his robes and his hair were all blood-colored, giving him a rather evil aura.

Whoosh. Ning waved his hand, causing Immortal Bloodpool's body to be drawn into his estate.

After inspecting the man's possessions, Ning found a few pleasant surprises. Although Immortal Bloodpool had slightly fewer treasures than Immortal Origination did, the difference wasn't that great...and one treasure was particularly useful to Ning.

"A suit of Dao armor." Ning waved his hand, causing a glittery suit of silverscale armor to appear in his hands. This was most likely a high-grade Dao armor of tremendous worth. The Fogstone Dominion only gave the generals of the Fogstone Army suits of top-grade Chaos armor, while the Blacklotus Emperor didn't even give the Mindlord or his other generals such precious equipment.

Armor was incredibly rare and expensive! Even a 'mere' high-grade Dao armor was worth more than a hundred cubes of chaos nectar.

"Bloodcloud Seat, Five Elements Bloodflame Needles." Ning nodded.

Immortal Bloodpool had a total of three sets of Dao treasures.

The armor was worth over a hundred cubes of chaos nectar. However, there was no way Ning would be willing to sell it. He focused on close combat and was in dire need of such a strong suit of armor.

The Bloodcloud Seat was an extremely bloodthirsty type of Dao weapon that was worth more than fifty cubes of chaos nectar.

The Five Elements Bloodflame Needles were a set of five needles that were also worth more than fifty cubes of chaos nectar.

Whoosh. Ning quickly bound the suit of armor to himself and put it on.

He now had a suit of Dao armor protecting his body, and his body was itself comparable to a Chaos treasure. Ning could now withstand even a full-force blow from an elite World God. But of course, although Ning could ‘withstand’ such a blow, he would still be easily captured and then killed in other ways. Naturally, Ning wouldn’t be so foolish as to actually get into a real fight against an elite World God.

“It seems as though after we leave this place, I’ll have to find an opportunity to sell off these treasures,” Ning mused to himself. Ning had no use to the treasures which Immortal Origination and Immortal Bloodpool had loved the most.

“Keep going forwards, Rocky,” Ning instructed.

“Yes, Master.” The stone titan advanced fearlessly. A short while later, he came to a halt. He then stretched out with his massive hands and pushed at a section of the wall. That section of the wall looked plain and ordinary, but when he pushed at the section it immediately swung open.

“World God Cavecry is inside there,” the stone titan sent mentally.

“Right.” Ning immediately walked to the entranceway and stared into the study.

The private study was quite large. It was completely silent here.

A black-robed figure was seated in the lotus position, an enormous banner placed behind him.

The ripples of divine power emanating from the black-robed man’s corpse were indeed that of a deceased World God. He was facing a wall which was covered by a painting, and the painting was the most eye-catching thing in the entire study.

The entire scroll emanated a towering aura of sword energy!

The sword energy filled the entire study. In fact, it was so powerful that it went through the entire Immortal palace and soared high into the heavens. Ning and Daolord Solesky had both been immediately able to discover the sword energy soaring out of this particular island.

“So the sword-ki came from this painting.” Ning stared at the painting. Because the banner behind World God Cavecry partially blocked his vision, he was only able to see that it appeared to be a painting of mountains and rivers.

“Should I enter, Master?” The stone titan knew that he shouldn’t act rashly at a time like this.

“Yes, but be careful,” Ning instructed.

The stone titan carefully crept into the study, walking towards the seated black-robed corpse. When he was roughly thirty meters away from the black-robed corpse, circles of divine runes suddenly began to manifest around corpse. The divine runes glowed with dazzling, beautiful light, forming an enormous hemisphere of light that surrounded and protected the corpse. Even the faintly glowing runes located on the walls of the corridor began to grow dramatically brighter!

BOOM!

A terrifying power suddenly burst forth. Ning was only able to use his sword to block from one direction, while the omnidirectional burst of power struck at his body from every other direction...

# Chapter 6: A Clean Sweep

A terrifying shockwave blasted out towards Ji Ning from every direction. Although the brunt of it was blocked by his armor, some of the power still made it through to assault Ning's body.

"Whoah."

Ning's legs were slightly flexed as he stood there in a stable position. He took a deep breath, then glanced at his surroundings. The divine runes that had been flickering on the walls had turned dim. A few aftershocks of power continued to swirl through the corridor, but they were incapable of posing any danger to Ning.

"So World God Cavecry actually prepared a nasty trick like this. What a nasty fellow. If a Chaos Immortal encountered this trap, he probably would've died," Ning murmured softly. The power of that formation was as strong as a frontal blow from a World God. Still, given Ning's power, even if he was still just wearing his previous set of top-grade Chaos armor he still wouldn't have been in any trouble.

Anyone with a strong divine body would've been able to withstand this blow. Only physically weak Ki Refiners would've been slain by it, most likely.

"Rocky." Ning stepped into the room.

The stone titan had been blasted into the room and against one of the walls. He had now regained his footing as well and he said in a rumbling voice, "I'm fine, Master. World God Cavecry really was a nasty piece of work. He probably set this formation up in secret. Even I didn't know about it."

"Right." Ning turned to glance at the private study. The private study was roughly three hundred meters in size, and the black-robed figure remained seated in the lotus position in the center of it. That enormous banner remained placed directly behind him.

Flutter. Flutter. Streams of black energy swirled around the enormous

banner as Fiendgod-like figures began to fly out from it. The creatures that flew out of the banner had human-shaped upper bodies but lower bodies of mist and smoke. They wore suits of black scale armor, had blood-red eyes, and sharp claws. All of them stared intently at Ning and the stone titan.

“Sinfiends.” The stone titan hurriedly sent mentally to Ning, “Master, this is a powerful sin treasure which World God Cavecry personally forged. It is known as the Eversnow Banner and it holds a total of nine sinfiends, each of which is slightly weaker than me.”

Ning’s face changed upon hearing this. A powerful sin treasure?

He could instantly tell that these three ‘sinfiends’ were creatures akin to the ‘ghost generals’ that existed within the Three Realms. The difference was that these sinfiends could grow powerful by devouring sin. When given certain valuable treasures that existed in the primordial chaos, they could undergo a fundamental transformation and become living creatures. These nine sinfiends were all World-level creatures.

“World God Cavecry died long ago,” the stone titan growled. “The nine of you still intend to bar me and my master?”

“Your master? You acknowledged a puny Elder God as your master?”

“Master created us. He shall always be our master.”

“Any who barge into Master’s cultivation grounds shall die.”

“Die!”

The nine sinfiends bellowed and transformed into blurs that charged towards Ning from every direction.

They were intelligent creatures. They knew that Ning was the master of the stone titan. So long as they could kill Ning, everything would come to an end.

“Foolish sinfiends.” The stone titan let out a roar, charging forward to meet them. He transformed into a streak of light, moving far faster than the sinfiends. His hands became enormous in size as he smashed down

towards the sinfiends with them.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

His enormous palm smashed down upon them again and again.

The stone titan possessed an overwhelming advantage in strength. As a stone titan golem, his speed and strength was far superior to the vast majority of World Gods! However, those World Gods all had high levels of insight into the Dao and were very skilled, which was why it would be very hard for the stone titan to slay them.

These sinfiends, however, also didn't have any insights into the Dao. They solely relied on their innate gifts and brute strength.

Bang! A sinfiend let out an ear-piercing screech as it was smashed aside.

The private room wasn't that large. The stone titan was able to stop six of the sinfiends all by himself. However, the other three managed to move past the stone titan and charge straight towards Ning.

"There's no way we can kill the stone golem. Kill the Elder God instead."

"Eat him."

"Eat him alive."

As the three sinfiends flew towards Ning, they emitted strange, ear-piercing cries that caused inaudible ripples of sound that struck out towards Ning's soul.

"Eh?" Ning's soul was protected by the heartforce soul-lock technique and reinforced by the azureflower mist energy. It was able to completely negate this soul attack.

"CHOP!"

Ning struck out with the sword in his hand.

Sword-light flashed in a dazzling manner.

Slash!

The Killsword stance, an attack that held nothing back. Ning had just unleashed a tiny amount of the power of Violetjewel's quintessence core.

Given that Ning himself had the strength of a World God, how could these puny sinfiends possibly withstand Ning's Eternal weapon?

Violetjewel managed to chop through a sinfiend's body with some difficulty, splitting it in two. Alas, the sinfiend completely transformed into mist before once more reforming in front of Ning. And yet, a look of terror and disbelief was now in its eyes.

"How can this be?"

"How could an Elder God have injured me?"

"How could a mere Elder God be this strong?" All the sinfiends were stunned.

"Surround him and attack him."

"He's just one person. Surround him, attack him, and kill him!" One sinfiend let out a sharp cry, followed by shrill screeches from the rest of the nine. The stone titan bellowed, "Foolish sinfiends! Shatter!" The stone titan smashed out with its giant palms with abandon. He rarely had the chance to unleash its full strength in such a manner because when fighting against World-level experts, they would make it extremely difficult for him to strike with full force.

The stone titan struck out with wild abandon. The sinfiends all tried to avoid him, instead focusing on attacking Ning.

"Chop!"

"Chop!"

Ning sent out nine sword-chops in succession, each chop splitting a sinfiend apart. Alas, Ning was still kept outside the room by their assaults, unable to enter it. These sinfiends were completely undamaged by his attacks, and they charged forward in an unceasing stream that prevented Ning from advancing.

"They are formless creatures. Chopping them apart is useless." Ning's gaze turned towards the banner that was placed behind the black-robed figure. "If I can bind that banner, the nine sinfiends will no longer pose

any danger.”

“Rocky,” Ning sent mentally.

“Master.” The stone titan looked at him.

“Bring that banner to me,” Ning instructed. Every single sinfiend was roughly as strong as he was, and they came in an unending stream; it would be extremely difficult for Ning to move past them and reach the banner.

“Alright.” The stone titan immediately marched towards the banner.

“Stop it!”

“Stop it!” The nine sinfiends began to panic. They had all been working on avoiding the stone titan, but now they no longer were able to continue to do so. The sinfiends all turned to charge towards the stone titans, resulting in a series of head-on clashes between a pair of giant stone palms and many sharp claws. Each time, the sinfiends were blasted apart... and yet, they would almost instantly recover and continue their attacks.

Every single sinfiend was roughly as strong as Ning himself. Eight of them had to work together in order to stop the stone titan in its tracks.

“Hmph.” Ning suddenly charged towards the banner. Although the lone remaining sinfiend sought to block him, he was completely dominated by Ning and his sword-arts. There was no way it could stop Ning at all.

“No...”

There was nothing the nine sinfiends could do. If they tied down the stone golem, they would be unable to tie down Ning. If they tied down Ning, they wouldn’t be able to tie down the stone golem.

As for the banner...the nine of them weren’t able to touch it. If they did, they would immediately be sucked into it.

Whoosh. Smiling, Ning stretched his hand out and grabbed the banner, immediately pouring his Immortal energy into it.

“Graaaaah!” The nine mighty sinfiends didn’t wish to give up, but they all dispersed into mist and were drawn back into the banner.

"It isn't that hard or that expensive to create sin treasures, but they are quite powerful. No wonder so many cultivators end up deciding to walk the path of evil." Ning sighed to himself. If one wished to create a golem, one had to have incredibly profound insights into the art of formations and large amounts of precious resources. Only then could a powerful golem to be created. By comparison, golems were far more costly and difficult to make.

Sinfiends? Sinfiends were easy, and the treasures meant to house them were cheap to make. After absorbing enough sin, they would naturally become very powerful, much like how sin-weapons could grow in strength as well.

As for the Sinfiends themselves? If they were fed enough sin, they would grow more powerful as well. The only thing you needed to do was slaughter many people and collect enough sin.

Whoosh.

After putting away the banner, Ning turned his gaze to the black-robed corpse and the distant painting of sword-ki that was hanging on the walls.

"Come here." Ning waved his hand, collecting both the corpse and the painting.

"Rocky, let's look around and see if we can find any other treasures," Ning instructed.

"Yes, Master."

These two began to search every nook and cranny of the entire estate for treasures. They even dug three feet deep into the floor of every room. Only after completely sweeping through it did they leave.

Atop a mountain on the island.

Ning sat down in a relaxed manner, then laughed softly. "I've swept this island clean of all treasures. I really made a killing this time. If it hadn't been for big brother Solesky, I don't know how long it would've taken for me to acquire such a hoard of treasures." Ning then turned his attention to the treasures which World God Cavecry had left behind.

# Chapter 7: A Sudden Change

After searching through the items, Ji Ning felt both delighted and slightly disappointment.

The surprise and delight came from the fact that World God Cavecry truly was quite wealthy. As a personal disciple of Daolord Windsource, he had treasures that were worth over a thousand cubes of chaos nectar, not including the sword-ki painting! What caused Ning to feel slightly disappointed was the fact that aside from the Eversnow Banner, none of the treasures of World God Cavecry were of use to himself at all.

For example, World God Cavecry's most valuable treasure-set was a set of six top-grade Dao scimitars. They were worth more than five hundred cubes...but alas, Ning used swords, not scimitars.

As for his armor, it was a set of high-grade Dao armor. This was the same type of armor that Immortal Bloodpool had used. Since Ning already had one, this second set was temporarily of no use to him.

"I suppose I'll sell it all once I leave."

Ning cast the treasures to the back of his mind, then waved his hand to summon the painting.

This was the most valuable treasure of the entire island. It was definitely worth as much as an Eternal weapon.

"What secrets are hidden within this painting?" Ning unfurled the painting and gave it a close look. He had already bound the painting and so the sword energy of the painting had been restrained. It now looked completely ordinary.

"It doesn't have any divine runes on it."

"There don't appear to be any ways to activate it."

"It...it is just a painting..." Ning stared at the sword-ki painting, puzzled.

The sword-ki painting looked like an ordinary painting of mountains and rivers. It held mountains, waterfalls, and creeks. In fact, from an

artistic standpoint the painting actually looked rather mediocre. Ning himself could paint something like this. And yet, whenever Ning extended his senses into this seemingly ordinary painting, he could sense a sword-intent that struck fear into his heart. The exalted sword-intent which filled the painting was just as strong as Violetjewel's quintessence core.

"The person who painted this painting had to be a terrifyingly powerful expert of the Dao of the Sword," Ning mused. "But so what? At least I can link my consciousness up with my sword's quintessence core and get a basic understanding of it. All I can do with this painting is look at it!"

What use was a painting that was merely filled with sword-intent that couldn't be interacted with?

Violetjewel's quintessence core had a similarly profound sword-intent, but Ning could actually make use of it to do battle!

"Wasn't this supposed to be equal to an Eternal weapon in value?"

"Eh, it makes sense. Daolord Windsourse told World God Cavecry to comprehend and master this painting, but he wasn't able to succeed in doing so before he died. I'm probably at too low a level of insight into the Dao to understand the true secrets hidden within the painting." Ning could do nothing save console himself with these words. Still, he couldn't help but give the painting a few more glances. He had a strange feeling that this painting was hiding certain secrets within it...but alas, a gauze had been draped over these secrets, making it impossible for him to behold them.

"What the hell is it?"

Ning ended up spending six more hours on the painting before giving up and putting it away for now.

"Master." The nearby stone titan said curiously, "Why have you come to this place? I heard that only Samsara Daolords are capable of passing through the Hundred Streams of the Windsourse Formation."

"I accompanied my big brother, of course." Ning smiled.

"Your big brother, Master?" The stone titan was quite curious, and his

dark yellow eyes suddenly lit up. “Master, your ‘big brother’ is a Daolord? Where is he?”

“He went to the central island.” Ning pointed to the central island. “We’ll just wait for him here. When he returns, he’ll take us out of the Windsource Ruins.”

If Daolord Solesky didn’t return, Ning himself certainly wouldn’t be strong enough to lead.

“But that’s where Daolord Windsource once lived. It is the most dangerous place in this world,” the stone titan said.

Suddenly, a golden ripple of power burst out from the central island. The terrifying ripple instantly swept out in every direction, terrifying Ning and causing his face to turn ashen. Upon seeing the golden omnidirectional wave blast out towards him, he knew that if it touched him he was dead. He wouldn’t even have a chance to dodge.

Fortunately, as the golden wave blasted out from the central island it parted past the various smaller islands.

“What the hell?” Ning was badly rattled.

“He must’ve activated some formation or trap,” the stone titan offered.

“I know that! But he didn’t activate anything earlier. What happened?” Ning was rather worried out. He had spent six hours meditating on the sword-ki painting and nothing had happened...but now, all of a sudden, a huge shockwave had just blasted out in every direction. This caused Ning to feel extremely uneasy.

Within the central island.

A barefoot, raggedy old man let out a long breath. The buildings around him had been completely reduced to rubble. Only a towering palace located at the very center of this island remained standing.

“Damn this Windsource. If he died, he died. Why the hell did he have to leave so many restrictive formations behind?” Daolord Solesky cursed softly. “What, did you want everyone to know how badass you once were?”

He knew that it wouldn't be easy, but upon actually entering the island he immediately found himself beset with countless dangers, even though there weren't any treasures nearby! This caused Daolord Solesky to feel quite irritated.

"Nobody can stop my dao!"

"Not only are you dead, even when you were alive you wouldn't have been able to stop me!"

Daolord Solesky no longer looked as relaxed as he normally did. A terrifying light was now shining in his eyes.

Whoosh!

Daolord Solesky actually split into two...then into four...then into eight...

In the blink of an eye, he split into more than ten thousand figures. Every single Daolord Solesky peered towards the undamaged main palace, then began to walk towards it from different parts of the island. The countless divine runes surrounding and protecting the main palace all began to flicker and flow.

Boom. Boom. Boom. Boom. Boom. Boom. As the thousands of Daolords advanced, some attacks began to erupt forth and cause his bodies to burst open like bubbles. However, those bodies would then quickly reform. A disturbance was caused within the formation, and quite a few of the bodies seized this opportunity to march inside the formation.

And so, in a seemingly simple fashion, the thousands of Daolords managed to completely bypass the protective barrier of countless divine runes.

"If the actual Hundred Streams of the Windsource formation was activated, I might be in for a bit of trouble. These lesser formations, however, are no match for me at all."

"Like an illusion."

"Like a shadow."

"Space and time."

“Only I remain.”

The thousands of bodies all vanished, leaving behind just one figure standing before the main palace.

Daolord Solesky stood there, staring at the silver-haired figure seated in the lotus position within the main palace. The silver-haired man had a handsome face, was dressed in white robes, had a smile on his face, and emanated an aura of light. He said with a smile, “I don’t know which fellow Daoist has arrived. Given how hard you worked to defeat the thirteen formations surrounding my island, I imagine you must’ve come for my Talisman of Eternity. The Talisman of Eternity is right here. Before my Daomerge, I nearly perished in order to acquire this Talisman of Eternity. So long as you are willing to kowtow to me three times, fellow Daoist, you may take this talisman with you. But if you wish to take it by force...hmph.”

“You want me to kowtow?” Daolord Solesky’s eyes bulged out.

“You are already dead, and yet you still wish to toy with me? I’ll never kowtow to you, even if it means that I’ll fail my Daomerge as well!” Daolord Solesky was truly enraged now.

He could tell that this was an illusory image when Daolord Windsource had left behind prior to dying.

“The Hundred Streams of the Windsource Formation is an enormous formation. There’s no way its full power can be instantly unleashed. Let’s see what other tricks you have up your sleeve besides this formation!” Daolord Solesky smiled coldly. “I wasn’t afraid of you when you were alive. Now that you are dead, I’m even less afraid of you!”

As he spoke, Daolord Solesky reached out with his hand.

Whoosh.

An enormous illusion of a giant palm suddenly appeared, and it made a snatching motion towards the clothes and treasures located at the very center of the palace. Daolord Windsource had failed his Daomerge, eventually perishing as a result. Since he had died due to failing his

Daomerge, at the moment of his death his entire body crumbled apart. Even his truesoul vanished, leaving nothing behind aside from his clothes and his treasures.

Whoosh. The giant palm grabbed the clothes and magic treasures. Although there were Eternal items in the pile, Daolord Solesky didn't care about them. The only thing that mattered was the Talisman of Eternity.

"I nearly died to acquire this Talisman of Eternity. Fellow Daoist, you want to simply seize it from me? Hahaha..."

Suddenly, a cold laugh began to ring out throughout the main palace.

Countless divine runes suddenly began to manifest from every inch of the palace, causing it to radiate with dazzling light. The entire main palace almost instantly blew apart, the terrifying shockwave sweeping through the entire area. Daolord Solesky's face immediately changed. He didn't even have a chance to curse; all he could do was immediately flee for his life.

Rumble...

The entire central island began to crumble as the savage wave of might spread out in every direction.

Ning and the stone titan were waiting patiently on their island for Daolord Solesky to return. They suddenly saw the entire central island begin to break apart as an incomprehensibly powerful shockwave suddenly lashed out in every direction.

"Careful, Master!" The stone titan's body instantly expanded dramatically as he transformed into a giant globe that completely surrounded Ning.

BOOM!!!!!!

The island which Ning was on began to violently tremble...and then, with a boom, it completely broke apart as well. The shattered bits of the island began to sink into the surrounding waters of the lake, and the palace itself was knocked thousands of kilometers away in the blink of an eye and sent into the distant, howling gray wind.

The stone titan was protecting Ning in the form of a giant boulder that had surrounded him. It was also sent flying and was swept into the howling gray wind, quickly disappearing within it.

# Chapter 8: Emperor Mirrorsnow

A short while later.

A stone titan was deep inside a giant pit, holding onto the edges of a giant crevice. The gray wind had dragged it inside here.

"Master, the wind is much weaker here," the stone titan sent mentally.

"Yes." Ji Ning let out a sigh of relief.

That had been far too dangerous.

Fortunately, he had taken on the stone golem as his servant. Otherwise, he probably would've lost his life just now!

"I wonder how my big brother is doing," Ning mused to himself. "That blast of power was simply incredible. Even though the stone titan covered me and absorbed more than 90% of the force, I still suffered serious internal injuries and used up a great deal of divine power. Without it, I definitely would have died."

Daolord Windsource's protective spell was meant to kill other Samsara Daolords who were as powerful as he had been. It was ridiculously powerful! Just the collateral shockwave alone was enough to wipe out weaker Samsara Daolords!

Ning truly had been incredibly lucky!

The twelve islands themselves possessed strong defensive properties. The shockwave had first expended much of its power tearing apart the islands, then landed against the stone titan which had protected Ning, who was wearing a set of high grade Dao armor. All of these factors combined were why Ning managed to survive!

"Master, what should we do next?" The stone titan sent.

"Wait." Ning sent mentally, "Let's just wait here for my big brother to come."

"We should be inside the Hundred Streams of the Windsource Formation," the stone titan sent mentally. "I heard that there are many

windbeasts located inside this formation, each of which has the power of a World-level expert. Once a large number of them surround us, we will be in grave danger.”

“I know.” Ning nodded. He had fought against the windbeasts before. “Don’t worry. If we just wait here quietly, it’ll be difficult for them to discover us.”

“Right,” the stone titan replied.

Time passed by slowly, one minute at a time.

Ning and the golem continued to wait within the deep abyss. “I have the talisman of welcome with me. Big brother can sense exactly where I am located. Why hasn’t he come to me yet?”

“Can it be that he...?”

A thought came to Ning’s mind. Had Daolord Solesky died?

Ning didn’t wish to believe it. Daolord Solesky had been incredibly powerful!

However, he couldn’t help but logically follow this train of thought. That last blast of power had been incredibly strong. Even the weaker shockwaves generated by it had been so strong as to wipe out all the islands. One could imagine how powerful the blast had been within the central island itself! It was entirely possible that Daolord Solesky had died in the face of such great power.

“Impossible.”

“He won’t die that easily.” Ning didn’t wish to believe it, and so he continued to wait quietly.

One hour.

Two hours.

Ning grew more and more nervous, but he continued to wait silently.

“Big brother...”

Ning truly didn’t wish to believe it.

Thump!

Suddenly, a rumbling sound could be heard from deep below them.

“Careful, Rocky.” Ning looked downwards. “It might be a windbeast.”

“A windbeast?” The stone titan was startled.

Ning felt a headache coming. He wasn’t afraid of one windbeast, but if an entire group of them attacked...

“It really is a windbeast!” Ning growled. Below them, at the very bottom of the deep abyss, he could vaguely make out the silvery-blue forms of three windbeasts. Ning instantly went on full alert...but then, he was confused. These three windbeasts were actually rolling forward.

“They...roll?” Ning was speechless.

Whoosh.

A familiar figure suddenly appeared next to two of the rolling windbeasts, foot upraised to deliver a kick. A look of utter terror could be seen on the windbeasts’ faces.

“Ahaha, brother Ji Ning! I finally found you. I searched forever.” The figure was initially quite blurry, but it quickly appeared before Ning. It was the ragged, barefoot Daolord Solesky.

“Big brother!” Ning was delighted.

“I’m glad you are safe.” Daolord Solesky let out a sigh of relief. “The Hundred Streams of the Windsource Formation is filled with twists and turns. It really is a pain in the ass. I could sense you weren’t too far away, but I just couldn’t find the right path to you. I ended up moving farther and farther away from you! I had to spend a bit of time understanding this formation before I could find the correct tunnel.”

“All the twisting tunnels really pissed me off. I really wanted to wreck the entire damn thing, but in the end I managed to keep my temper down.” Daolord Solesky’s face was rather ashen. He waved his hand towards the nearby wall.

Whoosh.

A giant illusory hand tore the wall open, carving out a small cave.

"I suffered a bit of an injury. I need to take a rest. We'll leave later," Daolord Solesky said.

"Of course. I'm in no rush," Ning said. Ning understood that Daolord Solesky had probably rushed off to search for him without even taking the time to heal.

"This Daolord Windsource guy really is a dumbass. Even in death, he wanted to screw other people over." Daolord Solesky entered the cave, then sat down in a rather frustrated, embarrassed manner. "Thank goodness this old man is pretty strong. Otherwise, this old man would've died just now."

"Hurry up and heal," Ning urged.

"Right." Daolord Solesky nodded and closed his eyes.

Rumble. Rumble. Rumble. A series of illusory circles began to radiate out from Daolord Solesky, causing spacetime to twist and distort. The flow of time in the surrounding area began to speed up rapidly, making time in the area move roughly a hundred times faster than in the outside world. Streams of condensed chaos energy began to swirl around Daolord Solesky, transforming him into a black hole that devoured chaos energy.

"He's absorbing energy from the primordial chaos even faster than I absorb energy from chaos jewels." Ning was secretly speechless.

Nearly an entire year went by before the process came to a halt.

The streams of chaos energy vanished and spacetime in the cave went back to normal. Daolord Solesky opened his eyes. Nearly a year had gone by within the cave, while merely three days had gone by in the outside world.

"I'm fine now." Daolord Solesky rose to his feet, a smug look on his face. "That Windsource idiot had to have spent a lot of time and effort setting up that nasty formation. A pity for him that this old man completely recovered after spending just three days."

“Congratulations, big brother,” Ning said.

“Ahaha! Yes, I should indeed be congratulated. This journey of mine into the Windsource Ruins was a success.” Daolord Solesky looked at Ning. “How about you? Did you get that painting?”

“Yes, I acquired the sword-ki painting.” Ning nodded. “However, I can’t see anything special about it at all, aside from its aura of sword-ki.”

“Ahaha! You don’t get it. Hand it over to me, I’ll help you take a look at it,” Daolord Solesky said.

Ning waved his hand, causing the painting to appear.

Daolord Solesky accepted the painting, opening it and taking a look at it. He nodded slightly as he pointed at the mountains and rivers. “Artistically speaking, this painting really is hideous. Emperor Mirrorsnow clearly is terrible at painting, yet he still takes delight in it. If he spent just a bit of effort on the actual Dao of Painting, he would’ve immediately reached an incredibly high level of skill in painting and calligraphy. And yet, he refuses to actually train in it, instead insisting on treating it as his hobby.”

“Ning said, “That’s how hobbies work, I suppose. If he treated it as part of his cultivation, he would’ve no longer enjoyed it.”

“I suppose.” Daolord Solesky nodded. “Your words make sense. Anyhow, although this painting is quite unsightly, it definitely is as valuable as an Eternal weapon. Emperor Mirrorsnow succeeded in his Daomerge, after all. He became an ancient, eternal figure.

“A successful Daomerge means becoming eternal?” Ning was surprised.

“Yes. Eternal.” Daolord Solesky mused softly, a distant look in his eyes, “Truly eternal in every possible spacetime continuum. No matter how much time passes, they shall remain eternal and everlasting. This old man is just one step away from that level...but alas, this step is the hardest step of all.”

“Enough of that.” Daolord Solesky looked at Ning. “In short...I once had the opportunity to meet Emperor Mirrorsnow. However, roughly a thousand chaos cycles ago, Emperor Mirrorsnow departed and ventured

off into unknown realms. The endless primordial chaos is simply too vast. As someone who had become a truly eternal figure, Emperor Mirrorsnow naturally would want to continue his journeys and see more things.”

“He was a fickle, restless man. He didn’t have the patience necessary to teach any disciples. However, before he left, he produced a total of forty sword-ki paintings,” Daolord Solesky said.

“Forty?” Ning was surprised. That many?

“Right.” Daolord Solesky nodded. “A total of ten sets of four paintings.”

“If you can collect an entire set and pass the trials he established within the paintings, you’ll be able to receive his legacy and become his personal disciple,” Daolord Solesky said. “Every single set can only be successfully used once, and so theoretically speaking he can take on a total of ten disciples at most.”

“But of course, Emperor Mirrorsnow scattered those forty paintings across many territories.” Daolord Solesky laughed. “To collect an entire set of four will be quite hard. This painting that you have is the third painting in the set.”

Ning immediately said, “But I didn’t discover any trials yet?”

“Haha...every single Mirrorsnow Painting actually holds an estate-world within it,” Daolord Solesky said. “Once you go inside it, you’ll be given a trial. If you master the relevant sword-art, you’ll have succeeded in passing the trial.”

# Chapter 9: The Badlands Court

“An estate-world?” Ning was rather startled. He had already bound the painting to himself, but he had yet to discover any estate-world hidden inside of it.

Daolord Solesky began to laugh when he saw the look Ning’s face. “That’s why I said you don’t get it. Emperor Mirrorsnow left behind those ten sets of paintings with the intention of finding good disciples for himself. However, as an Emperor who had succeeded in his Daomerge and gained eternity, he naturally hoped for his disciples to be figures of great power. They had to at least be capable of becoming Samsara Daolords! How could he possibly be willing to take on an Elder God or Ancestral Immortal as his disciple? They are far too weak, and some have been alive for countless chaos cycles and will never become World-level experts. If someone this weak became his disciple, he would’ve wasted a legacy spot!”

“Thus, only World-level experts can sense the true mysteries hidden within the Mirrorsnow Paintings. Only they are worthy of being tested by it,” Daolord Solesky said.

“You have to be at least a World-level expert?” Ning nodded slowly.

“No, you have to BE a World-level expert!” Daolord Solesky explained, “If you were a Samsara Daolord, you still wouldn’t be able to enter. Samsara Daolords are too strong; they would be able to easily pass his trial. However, Samsara Daolords have already found their own paths and discovered their own Daos. His legacy would be completely useless to them!”

“It has to be World-level experts. Only World-level experts can use these paintings! Only World-level experts are worthy of becoming his disciples,” Daolord Solesky said. “Emperor Mirrorsnow’s Dao was the Dao of the Sword! You are quite a good fit, which is why I agreed to let you go to that island.”

“Oh...” Ning nodded.

No wonder.

No wonder Daolord Windsource had his disciple, World God Cavecry, spend his time meditating on the Mirrorsnow Painting. It could be said that he was actually treating his disciple quite decently by giving him this opportunity. Alas, this was a trial that had been set down by an Eternal Emperor who had succeeded in his Daomerge. One had to acquire and master all four paintings in order to become his disciple, while World God Cavecry hadn't been able to pass the trial of even a single painting. If he had succeeded, Daolord Windsorce would've viewed him in a different light and allowed him to live.

"I only have a single painting, and there's only ten sets in total. Emperor Mirrorsnow scattered them throughout the territories..." Ning said worriedly, "Big brother, how am I supposed to get a full set?"

"Ten sets, forty paintings." Daolord Solesky smiled merrily. "There are ten of each painting, so it's not impossible for you to collect an entire set."

Ning listened carefully.

"I really shouldn't get involved. I should let you temper yourself and adventure for the paintings, but...my rashness damn near got you killed just now." Daolord Solesky said, "So I suppose it would only be fair for me to give you something nice in compensation. It doesn't make much of a difference anyhow."

"Catch." Daolord Solesky pulled out a jade slip and tossed it to Ning.

Ning accepted the slip.

"Memorize this," Daolord Solesky said.

"Alright." Ning immediately sent his Immortal energy into the jade slip as he began to read it.

A stream of information began to enter his mind.

"I swear on my very life itself..."

Ning immediately discovered a lifeblood oath within the jade slip. One had to swear a lifeblood oath in order to gain access to its contents. Ning read through the lifeblood oath. Simply put, it was an oath to never reveal

the contents of the jade slip under any circumstances. If he discovered similar information from other sources, he could only reveal the part he had learned from other sources to others.

This oath wasn't too stringent. Ning swore the lifeblood oath, then accepted the large amount of information that surged towards his mind.

"Emperor Mirrorsnow has a total of ten sets of paintings. We've discovered six ownerless sets of the first painting. The first is located in the third-level world of the 'Lost Tower City' of the Voidblue Territory..."

"We've discovered five ownerless sets of the second painting. The first is located in the Snowfall Territory..."

"We've discovered seven ownerless sets of the third painting. The first is located..."

"We've discovered three ownerless sets of the fourth painting..."

Ning stared speechlessly.

There were only forty paintings total, but there were records of twenty-one paintings here! They were scattered throughout the various territories, with the Badlands Territory holding merely two paintings.

One was the third painting, located in the core regions of the Windsource Ruins. Daolord Windsource had acquired it long ago. The core region was an incredibly dangerous place where Daolord Windsource had died. It was filled with many treasures but countless dangers. World-level experts who attempted to enter it would almost invariably perish.

The second was the first painting. It was located in the Allgod Estate. Daolord Allgod had acquired it long ago. Although it was merely in the inner region of the state, which wasn't that dangerous, the Allgod Estate was a place which was easily entered but almost impossible to leave!

This jade slip even contained detailed information regarding the various dangers one would encounter within the Windsource Ruins and the Allgod Estate.

"Big..." Ning was truly shocked. Why did his big brother have such a

detailed intelligence report regarding such an important treasure that was scattered across so many territories? In Ning's eyes, this sort of valuable information was equal to an Eternal weapon in value! Without this intelligence, he wouldn't have even known where to begin searching.

"Remember," Daolord Solesky said solemnly. "You are not allowed to discuss it with any others."

"Understood," Ning immediately said.

"In the future, when you are strong enough, you can go and search based on the intelligence I just gave you," Daolord Solesky said. 'However, these places are all rather dangerous. The ones in easy-to-get locations have been picked up long ago."

"As for the Allgod Estate...if you choose to challenge it, you must be careful," Daolord Solesky said. "When Daolord Allgod was alive, he was an extremely dangerous Daolord. Even I wouldn't have been a match for him."

Ning was startled. Daolord Allgod was this incredible?

The Allgod Estate...

Ning had heard of this place before. It was another one of the ancient ruins located within the Badlands Territory, and it was said to be even more dangerous than the Windsorce Ruins. Roughly 30% of the Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals who entered that place would make it out alive.

"He was terrifyingly strong, far more so than Daolord Windsorce. Even amongst Daolords, the Allgod Estate is not a place where many would dare tread!" Daolord Solesky let out a sigh. "Let's go. I already have the talisman I need. Accompany me to the Badlands Court. We're going to meet Daolord Badlands."

"Big brother, we're going to go meet Daolord Badlands?" Ning was puzzled.

"As I said, I came to the Badlands Territory because there are two places I have to visit," Daolord Solesky said. "The first place was the Windsorce

Ruins. As for the second place...I'll need Daolord Badlands to help me out with it."

Ning nodded slowly.

Daolord Badlands...he was indisputably the number one cultivator of the entire Badlands Territory. His power was unfathomable.

Daolord Solesky led Ning out of the Windsorce Ruins. They travelled to Sevenwater Star, then spent a hundred bottles of chaos nectar to travel to the Badlands Everworld.

Whoosh.

A wind was blowing.

Daolord Solesky led Ning forward atop a cloud through the air.

"Flying..." Ning still hadn't recovered from his shock. "Big brother, you are able to fly in the Badlands Everworld?"

"This everworld does indeed have certain restrictions placed upon it." Daolord Solesky smiled. "Its laws were created by the ancient power which created this everworld...but since a person was able to create these laws, then another person would be capable of resisting these laws! This old man is just one step away from the Daomerge. If that ancient power came in person, he'd be able to suppress me, but he's been gone for countless years. These empty laws cannot bind me."

Ning nodded.

"This old man can fly, but weaker Daolords wouldn't be able to." Daolord Solesky had quite a smug look on his face. "Ah, there we are." He pointed towards the front.

Ahead of them was an enormous lake that was at least a million kilometers in size. Ordinary mortals would describe it as a sea, but to cultivators it truly was nothing more than an inland lake. A large estate could be seen hovering above the lake, filled with countless buildings. In front of the great estate was an enormous stone stele.

The stele was three thousand meters high, and there was a single word

engraved upon it – Badlands!

A vigorous, heroic aura spread out from that stele, shaking the world around it.

“The Badlands Court,” Ning murmured softly.

The legendary Badlands Court! In truth, a smaller ‘Badlands Court’ existed within Waveshift City as well. However, this place was the true center and foundation of the organization. This was where Daolord Badlands lived.

“Badlands!” Daolord Solesky led Ning downwards, sending their cloud soaring across the lake. His voice echoed throughout the region. “This old man has come here to eat your food and drink your wine!”

Quite a few figures in the Badlands Court raised their heads to look up. When they saw the ragged, barefoot old man flying through the skies with a white-robed youth in tow, all of them were quite speechless.

“He’s flying?”

“You can fly in an everworld?”

These were proud, arrogant figures. They were World Gods and Chaos Immortals who could all but do as they pleased in the Badlands Territory... and yet, all of their hearts trembled. They knew very well what it meant for someone to be able to fly in this everworld. They all quickly put on very friendly looks as they gazed at the figures in the skies.

“Ahaha! How wonderful that you’ve arrived, big brother Solesky! It wouldn’t matter even if you ate me out of house and home!” A booming laugh rang out as an azure-robed man and a beautiful lady walked out of a house together. They walked into the air, striding towards Daolord Solesky.

# Chapter 10: An Avatar

When the cultivators of the Badlands Court saw these two emerge, they all felt quite proud. See? Daolord Badlands of our Badlands Court is also capable of flying in this everworld!

“Daolord Badlands really lives up to his reputation.” Ji Ning stood next to Daolord Solesky, simply watching this all happen. He was secretly quite surprised Solesky himself had said that weaker Daolords wouldn’t be able to fly in this everworld. Daolord Solesky truly was a formidable figure who was capable of controlling an entire territory.

“Oh?” Daolord Solesky glanced at the beautiful lady in surprise. “Little sister Yan’er, you reached the Daolord level as well? Congratulations, Badlands! You don’t even know how many of our old friends envy you two Dao-companions.”

“I just broke through recently.” The beautiful lady smiled. “And I’m merely at the first step. I’ll be happy if I can one day have even a fraction of your power, big brother Solesky.”

“Yan’er loves to waste time on random things. I’m amazed she even managed to become a Daolord.” The azure-robed man smiled as he looked towards Ning. “This is a member of your Vastheaven Palace?”

“Yes, he’s a brother of Vastheaven Palace.” Daolord Solesky nodded.

“Ji Ning greets you, Daolords.” Ning immediately greeted the two respectfully.

Everyone in the Badlands Territory knew that the Badlands Court was run by Daolord Badlands. Who would’ve thought that his Dao-companion would also become a Daolord?

Alas...

Dao-companion...

How wonderful it would be if he could journey through the vast universe alongside Yu Wei? Solesky’s words were correct; countless cultivators felt envious of Daolord Badlands and his Dao-companion.

"A brother of Vastheaven Palace?" Daolord Badlands gave Ning a second look, as did the beautiful woman next to him. Both felt that this Ji Ning fellow truly was quite lucky. It must be understood that for anyone wandering the primordial chaos, a powerful backer was of paramount importance. Generally speaking, anyone who heard the words 'a brother of Vastheaven Palace' would be terrified and unwilling to launch an attack.

All members of Vastheaven Palace viewed each other as brothers. They were a truly united force!

Thus, only a truly crazed, insane individual would dare to attack a member of Vastheaven Palace. The only reason the three Wujiao Godbeasts had dared to do so was because their greed had truly overwhelmed them...and it was also because they knew that World God Northrest didn't have any clones! If he had left a clone at Vastheaven Palace, the three Wujiao Godbeasts would have never dared to attack him under any situation.

To be a brother of Vastheaven Palace meant far more than merely being a disciple of the Badlands Court.

The disciples of the Badlands Court could do whatever they pleased in the Badlands Territory! Not even God Emperor Blacklotus or the Starlord of Fogstone would have dared to do anything to one of them. However, in the other territories of the Endless Territories, the Badlands Court was a much less imposing presence.

In addition, the disciples of the Badlands Court were clearly delineated in status based on their strength. The life of an Elder God or Ancestral Immortal was naturally valued much less than that of a World-level experts!

However, Vastheaven Palace treated all of its members equally. The life of every single member was incredibly precious, and actually joining Vastheaven Palace was extremely difficult. Once one succeeded in joining it, one would instantly be protected by its mighty aura and reputation.

In addition, the Badlands Court was overall weaker than Vastheaven

Palace. Daolord Solesky of Vastheaven Palace was a Daolord who was on the verge of the Daomerge, while Daolord Battlemaster was quite close to him in strength. Now that it had given birth to a third Daolord, it had only become still more powerful.

However, the only formidable figure the Badlands Court possessed was Daolord Badlands himself.

“Eating and drinking isn’t the main reason I came this time. There’s something I need to trouble you with, Badlands.” Daolord Solesky turned slightly more serious as he spoke.

“Oh? Come, come. Let’s sit and talk it over,” Daolord Badlands said hurriedly.

Whoosh. Whoosh.

Daolord Solesky led Ning while Daolord Badlands led his wife. The four flew into a secluded residence within the Badlands Court. The entire Badlands Court was merely a hundred thousand kilometers or so in size, but it was filled with quite a few mountains where the disciples of the Badlands Court had set up homes. Daolord Badlands had chosen a location which was the most quiet, secluded location within the entire region.

“Sit.”

Inside this thatched cottage, there was a long wooden table. Daolord Badlands and his wife sat down on one end of the table, while Daolord Solesky led Ning to sit down on the other end.

Daolord Badlands personally poured two cups of fragrant wine.

“Big brother Solesky, what do you need my aid with? So long as I can help you, I will definitely do my best,” Daolord Badlands said.

“Battlemaster is now in control of Vastheaven Palace, while brother Overflow has also broken through to become a Samsara Daolord. I no longer have anything to worry about, and so I can now focus on my Daomerge.” Daolord Solesky said slowly, “But...I’m still not completely confident in being able to succeed in it. The main reason I came to the

Badlands Territory is because of the Waveshift world!"

Ning was listening to this discussion carefully.

The Waveshift world?

This was the most dangerous and mysterious place of the entire Badlands Territory! The Badlands Territory had quite a few dangerous regions within it. Some were naturally formed from the primordial chaos itself while others were ruins left behind by deceased Samsara Daolords.

The Waveshift world, however, was the personal estate of the ancient power who had established the Badlands Everworld itself. It was filled with both incredible dangers as well as countless treasures.

Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals who entered it were absolutely guaranteed to die.

The majority of World-level experts who entered it would perish as well.

"You acquired the talisman?" Daolord Badlands asked.

"I paid a visit to the Windsource Ruins and acquired a talisman, yes." Daolord Solesky smiled.

"Oh?" Daolord Badlands was surprised. "I entered that place as well, but when I performed a bit of Numerancy, I predicted that I could very well perish if I tried to force my way through it. I ended up leaving."

"Ahahaha! You live up to your reputation, Badlands! In terms of Numerancy, you rank amongst the top three Daolords! Even my brother Battlemaster is a bit inferior to you." Daolord Solesky sighed. "Your prediction was quite accurate. Daolord Windsource died, but he still wanted to ensure that others wouldn't profit from his death. That final, cataclysmic attack he unleashed...thankfully, this old man is extremely skilled in staying alive. Other experts on my level who specialize in other areas may have very well died."

"Mm." Daolord Badlands nodded. "My own Numerancy told me as well that I would probably die if I tried to force it."

Daolord Solesky was extremely famous. The reason why Vastheaven

Palace was such a powerful organization was primarily due to Daolord Solesky's personal might, and he was famous for being incredibly hard to kill! If you weren't able to kill him, he would eventually come seek revenge upon you. Thus, most of the other ancient powers were unwilling to make an enemy out of him. This was also why Daolord Solesky was confident enough to force his way through the Windsorce Ruins.

"Now that you have the Talisman of Eternity...big brother Solesky, you can go to the Waveshift world." Daolord Badlands nodded.

"I'm not familiar with that place. No one is more familiar with that place than you, Badlands. That's why I'm hoping you can help me out," Daolord Solesky said. "Send one of your avatars and accompany me in my journey through the Waveshift world. Of course, I'm not asking you to do all this for free."

As he spoke, Daolord Solesky took out an estate-treasure and handed it over.

Daolord Badlands accepted the treasure, pondered for a moment, then nodded. "Fine. I'll send my avatar to accompany you to the Waveshift world, big brother Solesky! But I'll need a bit of time. Give me three years to prepare."

"I'm in no rush." Daolord Solesky relaxed slightly after seeing Daolord Badlands agree. Avatars were incredibly important to Daolords, and the chances that Daolord Badlands' avatar would survive the trip to the Waveshift world were quite low. That was why Daolord Solesky not only had to pay a high price, he also had to see if Daolord Badlands was willing to give him face.

Fortunately, the two were good friends.

There was no way he could've forced Daolord Badlands to do this. First of all, Daolord Badlands was extremely powerful, on par with Daolord Solesky himself. Secondly, if Badlands didn't whole-heartedly wish to help him and instead wanted to scheme against him, it wouldn't be too hard for Badlands to cause trouble with skewed Numerancy.

"The Water Curtain Home is located quite close to my place, and nobody

is staying inside it. Big brother Solesky, why don't you stay there for now along with my young friend Ji Ning?" Daolord Badlands said.

"Very well! Badlands, no need to send us off. We'll go by ourselves." Daolord Solesky immediately led Ning to depart from this place.

Daolord Badlands and the beautiful woman remained seated in the lotus position.

"Milord husband." The beautiful woman was rather worried. "The Waveshift world is filled with many dangers...and as you know, the place which Daolord Solesky is travelling to can be considered part of the core region."

"I know." Daolord Badlands nodded. "Although it isn't easy to create an avatar, if I spend three years in a spatial treasure I should be able to recreate a slightly weaker avatar. My true body will remain here as well, slowly empowering it and strengthening it. Big brother Solesky gave me enough treasure to create two avatars, with a little to spare."

"Alright." The beautiful woman nodded, but she remained somewhat unhappy.

A powerful avatar was incredibly important, both to Daolord Badlands himself as well as the entire Badlands Court.

# Chapter 11: The Daolord's Arrangements

The Water Curtain Home of the Badlands Court took up an area of roughly a hundred kilometers. It was a secluded, graceful place which the Badlands Court used to receive its most distinguished visitors.

The Water Curtain Home.

This was a dwelling with a garden, a palace, a study, and other buildings that were all hovering atop a great lake of water. They were connected to each other by a series of levitating wooden bridges, and a barefoot, ragged old man was currently walking alongside a white-robed youth across one of those bridges.

"Whew." Daolord Solesky let out a sigh of relief, an emotional look on his face. "I knew Badlands would help me out. When he actually said it, though, I couldn't help but feel rather guilty. I really hate owing favors to my old friends."

"It's just an avatar, big brother. You aren't asking him to go in person. Even if he loses it, he should be able to remake it quite quickly, right?" Ji Ning was rather puzzled by this.

Daolord Solesky turned to look at Ning. "A short period of time? Do you know how a Daolord creates his avatar?"

Ning was startled. He slowly shook his head.

"When a World-level expert finds his own Dao and is about to break through to become a Samsara Daolord, he must first ensure that both his body and his soul have reached the utter apex of fullness," Daolord Solesky said.

"The utter apex of fullness?" Ning murmured to himself.

"In other words, all of his clones must be merged into one," Daolord Solesky said. "It doesn't matter what type of cloning technique you might've learned in the past; you must merge all of your bodies into one. Of course, there are some special cases, such as the 'Primaltwins' which can be created by mortal cultivators. Because both the Primaltwin and the

true body have undergone the Celestial Tribulation, there's no way for them to merge together."

Ning nodded.

He himself had a Primaltwin that was a Ki Refiner. His true body was a dual refiner, training as both a Fiendgod Body Refiner and a Ki Refiner. His true body had eighteen clones, all of which could join together because they were completely identical. However, there were significant differences between Ning's Primaltwin and his true body. There was no way to merge them whatsoever.

"Thus, cultivators who started off as mortals essentially have two lives," Daolord Solesky said with a laugh. "However, although more than half of high-level cultivators started off as ordinary mortals, quite a few of them don't have Primaltwins! Some of them died, after all, over their many years of cultivation. I would say that more than 90% of Samsara Daolords only have their true body and do not have a Primaltwin."

Ning nodded slowly.

"Look at me. I'm a Samsara Daolord, and I'm currently very far away from Vastheaven Palace. Why is it that I'm still in touch with them? It is precisely because I have my 'avatar' there." Daolord Solesky looked at Ning.

"Avatars are created from magic treasures!" Daolord Solesky explained, "They are much like golems. We forge golem-bodies for ourselves, then send a strand of our soul into them and take control of them! Simply put, we essentially need to fully and perfectly merge our soul with a golem-body, then pour energy into it to upgrade it. The cost of every single avatar is greater than the cost of buying ten Eternal weapons."

Ning was secretly speechless.

"The treasures which I gave Badlands are enough for him to make two absolutely top-tier avatars, with a bit left to spare." Daolord Solesky let out a sigh. "But raw materials isn't the only thing needed to ensure that an avatar body can reach maximum power. The Daolord himself will need to spend an extremely long period of time building it up."

"In addition, each Daolord can generally only work on a single avatar at once. Each avatar only had a small amount of his soul, after all; once he stops focusing on it, it will slowly degrade in power. Generally speaking, most Daolords only have a single avatar," Daolord Solesky explained. "I only have a single avatar myself. Because avatars are essentially bodies formed from magic treasures, my avatar is able to seamlessly and perfectly integrate into the great formation protecting Vastheaven Palace. When fused into the formation, the power of my avatar is comparable to my own power! This ensures that it is more than capable of keeping Vastheaven Palace safe."

"In addition, when an avatar serves as the core of a defensive formation, it will ensure that the power of the formation itself will become tremendous."

"An avatar is a core force for any organization's defenses." Daolord Solesky looked at Ning. "Daolord Badlands' avatar is also capable of perfectly integrating into the formation protecting the Badlands Court. For me to ask him to send his avatar with me into the Waveshift world means that the Badlands Court's defenses will be significantly weakened."

Ning started to understand.

"The reason why he needs three years is because he needs the time to create a second, weaker avatar. In addition, this also means that his true body will have to stay at the Badlands Court and be unable to leave it!" Daolord Solesky continued, "Once his powerful avatar dies in the Waveshift world, he'll immediately turn all of his efforts and attention to strengthening the second avatar."

"He's already prepared for his avatar's death?" Ning was startled.

"Right." Daolord Solesky nodded. "His avatar stands a 90% chance of death if it joins me on a trip to the Waveshift world. A perfect avatar that he spend countless years on is going to die, just like that. This isn't just something that can be waved away by giving him some treasures. I owe Badlands now! If I fail in my Daomerge, then before I die I'll do everything I can to pay him back. But right now, I must do everything I can for my

Daomerge. Nothing else matters.”

Ning nodded slowly.

He had thought that an ‘avatar’ was something akin to the dharma-bodies which Lord Tathagata had in the Three Realms, a body that was created through divine abilities or secret arts. Now, it seemed, they were more like golems! They were completely different concepts.

Ning and Daolord Solesky sat down within a wooden house that was located inside the garden that was hovering above the water.

“Everything is going as I predicted. I now have the Talisman of Eternity, and Badlands will be sending his avatar to accompany me to the Waveshift world.” Daolord Solesky looked at Ning. “The only thing I didn’t predict was that you would be here. I won’t be able to take you to Vastheaven Palace right away. If everything goes completely and perfectly according to plan on my trip to the Waveshift world, I should be able to return in four or five years.”

“But if I end up trapped somewhere inside the Waveshift world, things will get tricky. I might be stuck there for hundreds of million years, or perhaps even as much as a hundred chaos cycles.” Daolord Solesky looked at Ning. “If I’m trapped there for an extended period of time, you’ll have to head off to Vastheaven Palace on your own.”

“Don’t worry about me, big brother.” Ning was quite confident in his abilities.

“It won’t be hard for you to break through to become a World God. Once you make your breakthrough, it’ll be much safer for you to travel off to Vastheaven Palace on your own.” Daolord Solesky waved his hand, causing a shimmering golden scroll to appear in the air before him. “This star map has a detailed route that leads from the Badlands Territory to the Vastheaven Territory. Memorize it right away.”

Ning was delighted. He immediately sent a strand of his coresense into the scroll, quickly memorizing its contents. After finishing, Ning was badly shocked by what he discovered.

What an incredible distance.

The Badlands Territory was located extremely far away from the Vastheaven Territory. The route which Daolord Solesky gave him was the simplest route possible, but it still required him to travel through a hundred and twenty-one different territories! Details regarding quite a few danger zones were also recorded on the star map. It must be understood that even the Starlord of Fogstone had only visited a few of the neighboring territories. If one wandered about randomly without a good star map, one could easily end up into a dangerous part of a foreign, unfamiliar territory.

"The star map I gave you only includes roughly three hundred or so territories worth of information." Daolord Solesky looked at Ning, then said solemnly, "There are also quite a few other foreign territories that I didn't note down because I'm worried that you might go astray. The Endless Territories are filled with countless dangers. A World-level expert can't just go running around randomly. You have to follow the line I mapped out. It'll lower the danger level significantly...but despite that, you are not to head out until you become a World-level expert."

"Understood." Ning nodded.

There was no such thing as true safety in the primordial chaos. It was filled with countless mysteries.

The existing maps and travel lines had been all verified and authenticated by countless generations of cultivators who had risked their very lives. These were all safe routes! If you ran around randomly without paying attention to those routes, you could easily end up trapped in a dangerous death trap.

The distance between the Badlands Territory and the Vastheaven Territory was simply too great. The route which Daolord Solesky had provided included some definitely safe locations as well as relatively safe locations. Only when Ning was strong enough would he be able to reach his destination.

"I'll bestow a few techniques upon you as well." Daolord Solesky waved

his hand, causing a series of bamboo slips to appear on the table before Ning. “In truth, after you formally join Vastheaven Palace you’ll be given access to a large amount of techniques and secret arts. Still...the formal rites will only occur after you actually reach Vastheaven Palace. Only then will you become a true member of Vastheaven Palace.”

“You have the talisman of welcome, and so it’s not a big deal if I bestow a few techniques upon you early.”

“Master these techniques and do your best to become a World-level expert as soon as possible. If I’m not able to return, you’ll have to rely on your own power to go to Vastheaven Palace,” Daolord Solesky said.

“Yes, big brother.” Ning felt tremendously grateful. Daolord Solesky had already taken many factors into account in trying to help Ning out. It wasn’t realistic to expect him to abandon his own plans and instead shepherd Ning through more than a hundred territories, some of which weren’t even directly linked by transfer arrays. There were actually a number of dangerous regions on the way as well.

Ning spent the next three years living in the Badlands Court. He permitted his retainers, Flamefairy Su Youji and Elder God Wilddog, to come out from his estate-world and also take up residence in the Water Curtain Home for now.

During these three years, Daolord Solesky would occasionally provide Ning with a bit of guidance. He even gave some advice to the Flamefairy. As for Elder God Wilddog, his comprehension abilities were too weak. Daolord Solesky couldn’t be bothered to teach him.

Three years passed in the blink of an eye.

# Chapter 12: The Nature of the Sword

On this day, Ji Ning was seated within the levitating wooden study, working on his calligraphy. Every single character was filled with his surging sword-intent.

Next to him was the Flamefairy, Su Youji. She was obediently helping him grind his ink and watching as Ning wrote. Usually, the Flamefairy was a woman with a temper that was just as fiery as her name. The reason why she was being so obedient as to help him grind his ink wasn't just because she was his retainer; it was also because she wanted to spend as much time next to him as possible. That way, when Daolord Solesky came to offer Ning his advice, he might give her some off-hand advice as well.

"That Daolord is simply incredible." Whenever the Flamefairy thought of Daolord Solesky, she was filled with admiration and amazement. "He gave me a few pointers during the past three years, allowing me to get a clear picture of what I need to do to advance to the World level. Once I break through this bottleneck, I'll become a World-level expert!"

Su Youji had benefited tremendously through her association with Ning.

Daolord Solesky was a Samsara Daolord who had reached the very verge of the Daomerge. There was no one else like him in the entire Badlands Territory; even Daolord Badlands was slightly weaker than him! For her to have the chance to get advice from someone like him was truly a tremendous blessing for her! When she had to learn on her own and struggle through many wrong paths, she had still become comparable to a supreme Elder God even though she was just a Ki Refiner. These days, she was improving at an astonishing pace and was just a breath away from becoming a World-level expert herself.

Ning had made significant improvements as well. Daolord Solesky had even personally sparred with him a few times while using the sword. As a result, Ning's understanding regarding the nature of the sword was undergoing a series of fundamental changes.

If one was at a completely different level of power, one would have a

different perspective on the Dao. Although World God Blackmist was a formidable figure, there was a limit to how much he understood. Although Daolord Solesky didn't really focus on the Dao of the Sword, there were certain commonalities which every single Dao shared.

"What is the sword?"

"Haha, I once heard Emperor Mirrorsnow discuss what the sword is. I felt that his words made a great deal of sense." Daolord Solesky had once said these words to Ning. "The sword is a weapon which living beings created in order to kill others! The sword has a tip, two edges, and two flat sides. It was designed to kill. In order for you to discover and understand the Dao of the Sword, you need to start with its creation and its design."

"How should the tip of the sword be used to kill?"

"How should you use a single edge of the sword to kill?"

"How should you use both edges together to kill?"

"How should you use the flat of the blade to kill?"

"When all these things are mixed together...how should you use them to kill?"

"When you meditate on the Dao, you meditate on the true essence and true nature of a thing. You should focus on simplicity, rather than complexity! If your Dao gets more and more complex, eventually you will lose yourself within it! Your Dao can appear to be complex to others, but to you it must be as clear and bright as a mirror." Daolord Solesky had looked at Ning. "Remember this. This is very important."

"Also – all techniques spring from the same source! If you reach a bottleneck that you cannot overcome in the Dao of the Sword, you can switch to other tasks such as calligraphy. I saw that your calligraphy isn't bad, and you can infuse it with your Dao of the Sword. This is something that is quite different from using it to fight. However, these two things will share many commonalities, and both have their strengths with regards to helping you understand the Dao. Based on what I know, the majority of Samsara Daolords who focus on the Dao of the Sword also enjoy painting

and calligraphy. I imagine there has to be a good reason for this.”

“I can also see that you have high affinity towards water, lightning, and space. Don’t discard or abandon these insights. Focus on them as well. There are commonalities between every single Dao. For example, although I’ve never focused on the Dao of the Sword, if I spent four or five days on it my mastery over the Dao of the Sword would become comparable to that of some weaker Samsara Daolords who do focus on the sword.”

Ning had felt as though a brand new gateway had just appeared before him, one which had brought him a completely new way of looking at the Dao of the Sword.

Ning had never intended to give up on water, lightning, space, or any of his other Daos. He did understand that all Daos shared certain commonalities.

As for calligraphy, he had always felt that writing calligraphy was very pleasing and relaxing. However, only after listening to Daolord Solesky’s words did he truly understand how helpful it could be.

A new world had truly opened up before him.

“Right. Long, long ago, one of the first creatures of the primordial chaos created the very first ‘sword’. Ever since then, countless living beings have used his ‘sword’. Their techniques constantly improved until it all reached the level of a Dao unto itself that only became more and more powerful. Only then did the Dao of the Sword, a Dao feared by countless cultivators, come into existence.”

“The tip of the sword...the edge...the double edge...the flat...”

Ever since that day, the way in which Ning viewed the sword completely changed.

In the past, he had always felt that the Dao of the Sword was truly unfathomably profound, and he had dedicated himself to piously and slowly understanding all of its mysteries.

Now, Ning had a different view of the sword. Although the Dao of the Sword was indeed profound, its fundamental essence remained quite

simple; it lay in the sword itself. If you could truly understand the structure of a sword, you would be able to quickly grasp the essence of the Dao of the Sword itself.

Ning now viewed the [Brightmoon] sword-art and the [Nameless] sword-art in completely different ways. He immediately began to retrofit them, making the ‘Blood Drop’ stance purer, the ‘Soleheart’ stance more ephemeral, the ‘Yin-Yang’ stance more chaotic, the ‘Heavenbreaker’ stance more dominating, and the ‘Shadowless’ stance slightly less unpredictable but even faster than before.

In fact, he split the Heavenbreaker stance into two different stances. The first used the edge of the sword to attack and was known as the ‘Heavenbreaker Hacker’; the other used the flat of the blade to attack and was known as the ‘Heavenbreaker – Eliminator’.

The power of the [Brightmoon] sword-art had suddenly increased more than twofold, just because he now had a completely different way of viewing the sword. In the distant future, Ning would understand how tremendously beneficial this new way of thinking would be for him and also feel even more gratitude towards Daolord Solesky for advising him.

“Mm.” Daolord Solesky was currently seated off in the distant, leisurely sipping some wine and watching as Ji Ning worked on his calligraphy within that levitating wooden study. Daolord Solesky couldn’t help but nod slowly.

“This Ji Ning really does have some talent.”

The Dao was not to be transmitted casually!

It wasn’t just that his guidance was incredibly valuable or precious. His avatar in Vastheaven Palace was capable of giving good guidance to every single member of Vastheaven Palace...and yet, every single cultivator had their own firm beliefs. If your guidance was very different from what they believed or what their own insights were, they would reject your guidance on an intrinsic level. Or worse; because they trusted in the Daolord and felt certain that his words had to be right, they might end up questioning their own Dao and losing their own way. That would be even worse!

Thus, each person's Dao truly was different.

It wasn't easy for a master to find a good disciple! When Ning had created his [Brightmoon] sword-art, he had already drawn the rough sketches of his own personal understanding of the Dao. When Ning had been in the Three Realms, he had proudly and foolishly believed that he could infuse the entirety of the Dao of the Sword into his five stances. What he didn't realize was that all five stances were just variations on the true essence of the sword.

He had already reached out to the true essence of the sword. He just didn't understand that he had done so.

Daolord Solesky's guidance helped him to see past his own preconceptions, allowing him to see the truth. Since this was the path he had already chosen, the guidance he was given was enormous beneficial and helped him to understand his path more clearly than before.

"Ji Ning." Daolord Solesky rose to his feet.

"Big brother." Ning put down his brush and hurriedly walked out of the study. Elder God Wilddog was on duty, awaiting his commands.

"I am going to go to the Waveshift world now," Daolord Solesky said. "After I leave, it'll all be up to you."

"Don't worry about me, big brother. When you go to the Waveshift world, you need to be careful and stay safe." Ning was worried as well. During the past three years, Ning had gotten a better sense of how dangerous the Waveshift world was. It was unfathomably more dangerous than the Windsorce Ruins had been, and even Daolord Solesky would be in danger of dying in there.

"Ahaha! This old man plans to succeed in the Daomerge. How could I possibly let myself die in the Waveshift world?" Daolord Solesky laughed loudly, then strode away into the skies. An azure-robed figure was already waiting for him high in the air. This was Daolord Badlands' avatar.

"Sorry for the trouble, brother Badlands," Daolord Solesky said.

"Haha, I've never gone into the core regions of the Waveshift world

either. Now that you are here, I can do a bit more exploring than I've done in the past." Daolord Badlands' avatar smiled.

"Let's go."

"Let's."

The two transformed into streaks of light, disappearing into the horizon.

Ning just watched them from afar. After having spent three years with Daolord Solesky, he knew that the man truly did view him as he would a brother.

"Come back alive, big brother." Ning murmured these words softly to himself.

Daolord Solesky had said that if everything went perfectly smoothly in the Waveshift world, he would be able to return in four or five years. If he ended up trapped, it could easily be hundreds of millions of years or even a hundred chaos cycles before he managed to escape.

Ning, the Flamefairy, and Elder God Wilddog continued to live within the Badlands Court. They slowly became familiar with the other cultivators who lived here, and Ning would even spend some time dueling with other cultivators of the Dao of the Sword. One of the competitions resulted in quite a bit of hubbub, because every single Elder God and Ancestral Immortal sword-wielder of the Badlands Court ended up being defeated by Ji Ning.

It must be understood that all of them used extremely ordinary swords and very little force; it was merely a contest of Daos.

In the end, even World-level experts got interested and involved. Now that Ning had begun to understand the true essence of the sword, only World-level experts who were truly skilled in the Dao of the Sword were able to suppress him...and they were only able to suppress, not defeat. The cultivators of the Badlands Court couldn't help but sigh to themselves, "Brother Darknorth is most likely going to become a World God through the Dao of the Sword."

Life was relaxed but quite fulfilling. Time passed on, year after year.

Three years. Five years. Ten years. Fifty years. A hundred years.

Ning continued his quiet life here at the Badlands Court, but Daolord Solesky still had yet to return.

# Chapter 13: The Mysterious Treasure Auction

“Ji Ning.”

Ji Ning was seated atop a levitating wooden bridge, lazily fishing. A voice suddenly rang out, badly startling him. He hurriedly turned his head, realizing that an azure-robed figure had just appeared next to him.

“Ji Ning greets you, Daolord.” Ning hurriedly rose to his feet. It was Daolord Badlands! Ning’s heart clenched. After having spent more than a hundred years here at the Badlands Court, he had grown quite used to this place and become very familiar with many of its World Gods, Chaos Immortals, Elder Gods, and Ancestral Immortals. However, he had never met Daolord Badlands a second time.

He knew that Daolord Badlands rarely showed his face in the Badlands Court. Millions of years often passed without a single appearance! However, he was actually one of the more visible Daolords. Some Samsara Daolords would only reveal themselves within their own clans a single time during each chaos cycle.

When there was such an absolute disparity in power, it became hard for people to become friends and hold conversations.

“Brother Solesky asked me to pass you a message.” Daolord Badlands looked at Ning. “He probably won’t be able to make it out of there any time soon. Your return to Vastheaven Palace will be up to you.”

“He won’t be able to make it out of there any time soon?” Ning was startled. He asked nervously, “Daolord, my big brother...”

“You don’t have to worry.” Daolord Badlands smiled. “He isn’t in much danger, but both him and my avatar are going to be trapped for a while. It’ll probably take at least a million years to make it out of the formation we are currently trapped in, and there will be more dangers to come!”

Ning nodded slowly.

“Catch.” Daolord Badlands tossed a black talisman over.

Ning accepted the talisman. This talisman only had two rippling waves carved onto it. One wave looked fast while the other looked slow and calm.”

“This is the Badlands insignia,” Daolord Badlands said. “I’ve set down restrictive spells upon it, ensuring that it can only be bound once. Anyone who has the Badlands insignia is equivalent in status to a formal member of the Badlands Court. In the Badlands Territory, it’ll be of some use to you.”

“Thank you, Daolord.” Ning hurriedly expressed his gratitude.

He had naturally heard of the Badlands insignia before.

With this insignia in hand, not even figures like God Emperor Blacklotus would dare to touch him. Although his status as a disciple of Vastheaven Palace was even more incredible, Vastheaven Palace was too far away. Almost nobody in the Badlands Territory even knew what Vastheaven Palace was. In fact, not even many of the disciples of the Badlands Court knew about it.

Similarly, not many of the members of Vastheaven Palace had ever heard of the Badlands Court. The Daolords of each organization generally wouldn’t give the other members such detailed maps, for fear that they might end up running too far away and getting lost, never to be able to make it back.

But of course, the powerful Daolords of Vastheaven Palace, the Badlands Court, and other similar organizations all knew each other. Thus, many Samsara Daolords would be unwilling to attack Ning once they realized who Ning was.

Powerful World-level experts generally weren’t afraid of other World-level experts. If they weren’t able to win, they would be able to flee! They only feared Samsara Daolords...and that’s when having a powerful organization as a backer made all the difference.

However, you also had to understand what the relationship was between

your enemy and your own organization. God Emperor Blacklotus had foolishly reported that he was the disciple of Daolord Seven Sovereigns, but what he didn't know was that Daolord Seven Sovereigns was mortal enemies with Daolord Solesky...and had been so terrified by Daolord Solesky that he had fled long ago. Blacklotus reporting his affiliation only resulted in him dying even quicker.

Time passed on, day by day.

Ning continued to live within the Badlands Court. He was in no rush to go out adventuring, because he was currently growing stronger at a break-neck pace.

The Seventh Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand] had started to take form long ago. Thanks to Daolord Solesky's guidance, it had truly come into being.

After using up a few dozen cubes worth of chaos jewels and the Heavengazer Tower, Ning had already mastered the middle portion of the [Golden Idol] as well. His body was now comparable to a top-grade Chaos treasure, the same level which World God Northrest had reached all those years ago.

These two accomplishments had been relatively simple ones.

The reason why Ning continued to live peacefully here at the Badlands Court was because he now had a completely different way of viewing the Dao of the Sword. He was improving incredibly fast and had yet to encounter a bottleneck! Generally speaking, cultivators would only go out adventuring when they had reached a bottleneck in their cultivation. Only by seeing and experiencing more things would they be able to more easily break through those bottlenecks.

"Darknorth, senior apprentice-brother Threecold is planning to pay a visit to the Azuresky Territory's Startower region and give it a go. Anyone who wants to go with him can go seek him out. Any interest?"

"The Azuresky Territory? The Startower region?"

"Yes. It's not too far away from our Badlands territory. The legends say

that the Startower region was created when an ancient power tossed out a tower-shaped magic treasure and left it there in the primordial chaos. The tower drew in energy from the primordial chaos, creating an entire region of incredible power around itself. I hear that even Samsara Daolords will visit that place in the hopes of finding and acquiring that magic tower. Unfortunately, none of them have been able to master it to date. The treasures and techniques it contains are enough to satisfy World-level experts like us. Want to go? Senior apprentice-brother Threfrost is very powerful. If we go with him, it'll be much safer."

"I don't wish to leave for now. Thank you for asking, brother Sevencolor."

"Oh. Alright."

Immortal Sevencolor exchanged a few more words with Ning, then departed.

Ning couldn't help but sigh to himself.

As the most powerful organization within the entire Badlands Territory, the Badlands Court was quite strict on accepting new disciples. New disciples had to be tremendously talented, and most were World-level experts. The Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals who made it in were all monstrously talented, and so most of the World-level experts of the Badlands Court were able to reach the level of full mastery and become master-class World Gods.

Upon reaching this level, the next breakthrough would result in them becoming Samsara Daolords!

There were many independent World-level experts in the outside world, but only a few of them would ever reach the level of full mastery. However, the vast majority of the disciples of the Badlands Court would become master-class World Gods! Thus, all of them were filled with exuberance and valor. They wished to go out and adventure, in the process discovering their own Daos and becoming Samsara Daolords.

"Almost everyone at Fogstone had given up and had chosen to live a peaceful, comfortable life. Everyone in the Badlands Court, however, is

still fighting hard for their dreams.”

Ning couldn’t help but sigh.

And yet, what he didn’t understand was that in truth there were also some members of the Badlands Court who had fought long and hard, yet remained unable to break through and so had given up. They were tired. They had lost their energy, their passion, and so they chose to leave the Badlands Court and find another place where they would live in peace. Those who decided to remain in the Badlands Court were the ones who were filled with energy and motivation.

This was the real reason why so many members of the Badlands Court would often venture out into new places. Each time they did so, they would usually announce it to their peers and try to recruit others to go with them. If four or five of them joined forces, they would stand a much better chance of surviving their adventures! Brothers from the same organization were more unified and generally more trustworthy than outsiders, after all.

“I’m beginning to solve the riddle of the third stance of the [Nameless] sword-art, the Great Firmament stance.”

“I’m improving very rapidly. When I reach a bottleneck or when I master this third stance, I’ll travel to the Allgod Estate. When I do that, I’ll let everyone in the Badlands Court know and invite some of them to accompany me,” Ning mused to himself.

The Allgod Estate...

Aside from the Windsource Ruins, the only place in the entire Badlands Territory which had a copy of a Mirrorsnow Painting was the Allgod Estate.

A hundred and sixty-one years after Ning arrived at the Badlands Court.

“Treasure auction.”

“They are about to start a treasure auction.”

The news quickly spread throughout the entire Badlands Court, causing

quite a stir.

"Master! Master!" Flamefairy Su Youji came running into the room.

"What is it?" Ning was in the middle of practicing some calligraphy and meditating on his sword-arts. He put down his quill, looking up towards Su Youji.

"I just received word of something." Su Youji's oval face was pink and lovely. Her eyes were very bright, and she extruded an aura of natural charm. Thus, she was quite a popular figure within the Badlands Court and made many friends. In contrast, Elder God Wilddog was always a cold, unfriendly figure. He didn't make many friends.

"Ninety-nine years from now, the Palace Opulentia will be hosting a Treasure Auction," Su Youji said.

"A treasure auction?" Ning's eyes lit up.

"There will be many treasures to buy, and whoever offers the most money will take the treasures home. Many treasures which normally are never available for sale will be on display." Su Youji was quite excited. "I heard that these auctions are only hosted ten times per chaos cycle. Each time, almost all of the World-level experts of the entire Badlands Territory will gather around it."

"I heard that all sorts of treasure will be offered for sale, including Eternal weapons and some treasures that are even more marvelous than Eternal weapons." Su Youji was incredibly excited. "Master, we have to go take a look."

Ning nodded slowly.

He knew that in every single territory, including the Badlands Territory and the Vastheaven Territory, ten treasure auctions would be held during each chaos cycle! All sorts of valuable treasures would emerge for the many cultivators in that territory to bid on. These weren't treasures that belonged to the Badlands Court or the Vastheaven Palace; rather, they were treasures delivered to this place by another mysterious organization.

The organization would send a Daolord to host each auction. Ten times

per chaos cycle, the Daolord would come here to the Badlands Court and host a treasure auction. The Palace Opulentia merely loaned out their own auction grounds for this mysterious organization to use.

Any treasures that were not purchased during the auction would all be taken away at the end.

“This mysterious organization is spread throughout almost every single territory,” Ning mused to himself. “Every single territory has these auctions. Mm. I absolutely cannot miss this one. If I do, it’ll be countless years before the next one.”

“It seems I’ll need to hurry up and sell off the treasures I acquired in the Windswept Ruins. I need to prepare some money for the upcoming treasure auction.” Ning’s eyes were filled with eagerness.

# Chapter 14: The Gathering

This was a blazing hot planet. The surface of this planet was filled with lakes of lava and magma.

Whoooosh. One particular lake of lava could be seen bubbling and hissing as a gigantic head could be seen slowly bobbing up and down at the banks.

Suddenly...

The giant sleeping creature opened his crimson eyes.

“Oh? Treasure auction?”

Whoosh.

This enormous creature that had been lying within the flows of lava suddenly transformed into a streak of light, flying over to the nearby shores and transforming into a handsome, barefoot man. A set of fiery red robes appeared over his body as well.

“The treasure auction for the Badlands Territory will begin ninety-two years from now?” A simian red light could be seen flickering in the man’s eyes. “Not too far away. Hmph. I’ve wandered through quite a few Daolord ruins over the past ten chaos cycles, and I finally managed to find an Eternal weapon for myself! If I sell both it and the other Eternal weapon I acquired all those years ago, I might be able to purchase a ‘Pseudo Samsara’ pill.”

“A Pseudo Samsara pill!”

“I have to get it, no matter the cost!” The handsome man gritted his teeth, then transformed into a streak of fiery light and disappeared into the heavens.

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“A treasure auction? It’ll be in the Waveshift City of the Badlands Everworld? Eighty-six years from now?” A beautiful woman dressed in elaborated white robes was seated atop a towering throne. She smiled as

she spoke in a soft voice.

“Sect Mistress, you’ve been in secluded meditation this entire time and so I didn’t dare to disturb you. If you didn’t emerge by the final year, I would’ve been forced to disrupt your session. Thankfully, that wasn’t necessary.” A woman dressed in a beautiful violet robed laughed.

“I finally managed to store up three thousand cubes of chaos nectar. Hopefully, this time I’ll be able to buy the treasures I need.” The white-robed woman mused softly, “I’ll be comparable to supreme World Gods if I succeed.”

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“A treasure auction?”

“Let’s go check it out and see if there’s anything we can afford that would be of use to us.”

“Let’s go.”

Three World-level experts who had entered seclusion together within a chaosworld had decided to make haste to the Badlands Everworld.

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After the Badlands Court released the news of the auction, the word quickly spread throughout the entire Badland Territory. As for the major organizations who were headquartered in Waveshift City, they naturally became the first to find out.

A short while later, this information also spread out to some of the nearby territories.

The reason why it had been announced ninety-nine years in advance was to give everyone enough time to receive word of this auction, then travel to the Badlands Everworld. Some had actually come all the way from neighboring territories.

The ancient city of Waveshift was growing more and more lively by the day.

New, unfamiliar World Gods and Chaos Immortals began to gather

here. Some of them belonged to the Badlands Territory. However, the more famous World-level experts in the Badlands Territory were figures who had lost their courage and determination, choosing to live peaceful lives of luxury. Most of the figures who were still dedicated to their Dao and improving themselves spent all of their time adventuring through the primordial chaos, resulting in very few Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals knowing about them.

But of course, some of the unfamiliar cultivators had come here from the neighboring territories.

“Master, when nightfall comes, the treasure auction shall begin.” The skinny, grim-looking Elder God Wilddog was following behind Ning.

“What a beautiful sight.” The nearby Flamefairy let out an amazed sigh.

“Yes.” Ning nodded slowly.

The skies had already begun to darken. This everworld had been created by an ancient power, but it also had cycles of day and night.

The distant Palace Opulentia was a dazzling, eye-catching sight. Streams of light swirled around him, and it was the most dazzling, beautiful building located within the entire Waveshift City. Many World Gods and Chaos Immortals were currently in the process of entering the palace.

“It’s usually quite rare for us to encounter a World God or Chaos Immortal, but we are swarming with them today.” Ning sighed in amazement.

“Of course we are. More than half of the World-level experts of the entire Badlands Territory have arrived, as well as some from other nearby territories.” Su Youji was extremely excited.

“Let’s go. We should go inside as well.” As Ning spoke, he led Su Youji and Elder God Wilddog into the Palace Opulentia.

The Palace Opulentia was extremely noisy today, and it had a World God and Chaos Immortal standing guard outside of it.

“Please enter, fellow Daoist.”

“Please enter, fellow Daoist.”

The two disciples of the Badlands Court smiled as they welcomed the guests.

As for the World Gods and Chaos Immortals who had come to take part in the treasure auction, they were all courteous as they responded to the greetings. This was the territory of the Badlands Court, after all, and Daolord Badlands’ reputation in this territory and the neighboring territories was quite stunning.

“Anyone below the World level, come this way.” A female attendant was leading the way for the weaker cultivators.

“Master, there are so many World-level powers here!” A True Immortal was following behind an Elder God in terror. This Elder God was quite famous in their homeland, but he was currently walking forward nervously for fear of accidentally offending someone. “Just follow me.” The Elder God was behaving quite obediently and he followed the female attendant into the side door.

“This treasure auction will be an extraordinary one. All of the treasures up for sale are quite extraordinary, but space is limited. Anyone below the World level has to prove that he has at least ten cubes of chaos nectar before being granted entry. I hope you can understand, fellow Daoist.” Beyond the side door were two female attendants, and one of them spoke out courteously to the Elder God.

“Naturally, naturally.”

“Wonderful. This way, fellow Daoist.”

The Palace Opulentia kept things in perfect order.

World-level experts were allowed to enter the bidding grounds, but Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals had to be tested. Otherwise, the spectators would end up squeezing out all of the actual bidders!

The white-robed Ji Ning led the fiery and dazzling Su Youji as well as the grim, icy-cold Elder God Wilddog towards the palace as well.

“Anyone below the World level, come this way.” A female attendant came to greet them.

One of the two disciples of the Badlands Court stationed outside the palace noticed this sight. The Chaos Immortal immediately walked over and barked, “Step back!”

The female attendant was badly shocked. She was nothing more than a hired employee, not a real disciple of the Badlands Court.

“Brother Darknorth, why didn’t you come alongside the rest of my fellow disciples?” The Chaos Immortal laughed. This was Immortal Sevencolor, who was one of the disciples of the Badlands Court who was on the most friendly terms with Ning.

“I wanted to check the place out so I came out for a stroll. There really are a lot of World-level experts today,” Ning said with a smile.

“Yes there are. You normally would never see this many of them in one place. Only the treasure auction can possibly attract so many World-level figures from all the nearby territories. In fact, even Daolords have come.” Immortal Sevencolor lowered his voice conspiratorially when he said this.

“Oh?” Ning was surprised. Daolords?

“Darknorth, you can go straight to the third floor. That’s the place we’ve reserved for ourselves. No need to waste your time in the main hall downstairs,” Immortal Sevencolor said.

“Alright.” Ning nodded. “You can go back now. I know you are very busy today!”

“Haha.” Immortal Sevencolor chuckled, then hurriedly returned to the palace entrance. As for Ning, he led Su Youji and Elder God Wilddog into the Palace Opulentia through the main gates. This caused some of the nearby Chaos Immortals and World Gods to stare at him in a somewhat puzzled manner.

“Darknorth.”

“This way, brother Darknorth.”

There were some disciples of the Badlands Court maintaining order inside the palace as well. When they saw Ning, they immediately came to greet him.

"You can go straight to the third floor, brother Darknorth." Ning was guided straight to the third floor which had many private rooms within it. This was where the disciples of the Badlands Court were going to stay, and Ning was given a room of his own.

Ning, Su Youji, and Elder God Wilddog entered their room. They were able to see through an enormous window to the great hall below them.

The hall below them was filled with many seats that were occupied by World Gods and Chaos Immortals, with the Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals seated to the rear. There were quite a few rooms available on the second floor, but one had to spend ten cubes of chaos nectar in order to claim one. Ten cubes of chaos nectar was enough to purchase a Dao weapon. This was flat out extortion! Thus, 99% of World Gods and Chaos Immortals elected to sit in the great hall below.

A tiny fraction who truly did not wish to reveal themselves chose to sit on the second floor.

The top floor of the hall was quite spacious. A white-robed women was seated in the lotus position, and a stick of incense had been placed next to her. The scent of the incense swirled around her, emanating a sense of utter peacefulness.

"Thousand Shadows." Two figures walked in from outside. It was the azure-robed Daolord Badlands and his beautiful wife.

"Badlands. Little sister Yan'er." The white-robed woman nodded slowly.

"Dracogod came as well," Daolord Badlands said.

"Dracogod?" The seated woman frowned slightly when she heard the name, a slightly disgusted look on her face.

At this moment, a man of noble demeanor dressed in golden robes walked in. He looked very poised and had a few scales on his forehead. This was Daolord Dracogod. When he saw the white-robed woman, he

smiled. “Fairy Thousand Shadows! I didn’t expect you to be the one in charge of escorting the treasures this time. If I knew, I would’ve come to help out instead of letting you go to all this trouble.”

“I wouldn’t dare to ask you to help,” the white-robed woman said calmly.

Daolord Dracogod chuckled, but a hint of ice could be seen in his smile.

Daolord Badlands and his wife exchanged a glance. There was nothing they could do. Due to a ‘dragonification fruit’, a feud had sprung up between Daolord Dracogod and Daolord Thousand Shadows. Most likely, if they were meeting anywhere else, they would already be trying to kill each other.

# Chapter 15: The Treasure Auction Begins

“Fellow Daoists.” A loud laugh rang out as an azure-robed man with deer antlers on his head walked in.

“Brother Daoist Azuresky! I didn’t expect you to join this treasure auction.” Daolord Dracogod was the first to respond in a very warm fashion.

“Old brother Azuresky.” Daolord Badlands and his wife greeted him as well.

“Mm.” The antlered man smiled and nodded at Daolord Badlands and his wife, then glanced at Daolord Dracogod. Finally, he turned his gaze towards the white-robed woman. He smiled. “Thousand Shadows, I heard that you were the one responsible for escorting the treasures this time. My Azuresky Territory is pretty close to this place, so I came to come visit my old friends.”

“It has indeed been quite some time.” The white-robed female Daolord nodded slowly, a hint of a smile on her face.

This was the most powerful figure of the surrounding territories, Azuresky. Azuresky was another major power who was at the verge of the Daomerge, but his Azuresky Sect didn’t have any powerful Daolords that could help assume the mantle of leadership. Given that he still had plenty of time left, Daolord Azuresky spent most of his time slowly accumulating more power and experience, planning on attempting the Daomerge sometime in the future.

Whoosh. A gust of wind blew past, materializing into a figure.

“Little sister Thousand Shadows.” A short old man dressed in short sleeves beamed merrily and called out at her.

“Big brother Waterwind.” The white-robed woman had acted in quite an aloof manner thus far, but she now hurriedly rose to her feet and walked over towards that short old man and grabbed his hand. “Big brother Waterwind, it’s almost impossible for me to find you. The only reason I

accepted this mission to the Badlands Territory was because I thought I might be able to see you. And now, I really have!"

"Ahaha, your big brother just loves to go wandering around the world," Waterwind laughed.

"Long time no see, Waterwind." Daolord Badlands smiled as well.

"Badlands." Waterwind nodded.

The Badlands Territory actually held four Daolords. However, most of them rarely showed their faces, and so most Elder Gods, Ancestral Immortals, and World-level figures only knew of Daolord Badlands. They didn't know any of the others.

The four Daolords of the Badlands Territory were Daolord Badlands, his wife, Daolord Waterwind, and Daolord Cavefloat. Daolord Cavefloat was somewhat weak, while Waterwind was extremely lazy. Waterwind had no interest in setting up his own sect whatsoever, preferring to wander the primordial chaos by himself. In terms of strength, however, he was a formidable figure who was absolutely on par with Daolord Badlands himself.

Of the five Daolords on the top level, the strongest was Daolord Azuresky. Daolord Badlands and Daolord Waterwind were ranked second, while Daolord Thousand Shadows and Daolord Dracogod were even weaker. As for Daolord Badlands' wife, she was the weakest one of them all.

Generally speaking, not many Daolords would be drawn to any given treasure auction; it was normal for four or five to attend at most. This was because these treasure auctions were mainly meant to let World-level experts have a chance to buy some fairly rare items. However, each treasure auction would also hold a few items that would make even Daolords feel envious, which was why they would often come and see if there was anything they fancied.

"Brother Daoist Azuresky." Daolord Dracogod behaved in an extremely friendly manner, repeatedly referring to Azuresky as 'brother Daoist'. This caused Waterwind to purse his lips in disdain.

If Waterwind was a solitary man who wandered as he pleased, Dracogod was the exact opposite. He curried favor with everyone around him and enjoyed making friends with the most powerful Daolords he could find! Daolord Solesky and Daolord Azuresky both were at the verge of the Daomerge and were extremely frightening figures of tremendous power.

If they failed their Daomerge, it was guaranteed that they would eventually perish. However, if they went berserk before they died, they would prove to be a terrifying foe for anyone to encounter. Who would dare antagonize someone who knew that death was coming no matter what? Not even ancient powers who had succeeded in their Daomerge and gained eternity would be willing to antagonize Daolords who had failed in their Daomerge.

Daolord Dracogod delighted in befriending the top-tier Daolords, doing everything in his power to curry favor with them. And as a result, he really did end up making quite a few friends. Generally speaking, no matter where he went, the other Daolords would give him some face. However, many solitary wanderers like Daolord Waterwind would feel very disdainful towards him.

"The treasure auction is beginning." Daolord Thousand Shadows glanced downwards.

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Ji Ning, Su Youji, and Wilddog peered out through their giant window towards the great hall below them. The hall didn't look that large from the outside, but it was actually ten kilometers in size. Tens of thousands of cultivators were seated around the central auctioning platform. Most of the people present were World Gods and Chaos Immortals, with a few Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals present.

Even the Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals who were allowed in had to have at least ten cubes of chaos nectar in wealth. The chairs were all seated a fair distance from each other as there was ten kilometers worth of space here. But of course, all of them had such perfect vision that they could see ants crawling on the ground from ten kilometers away with

absolute clarity.

“Master, it has begun.” Su Youji hurriedly pointed downwards.

“Right.” Ning looked as well.

Three female Chaos Immortals dressed in marvelous floral robes walked out to the central auction platform. Their leader was a woman whose skin looked like it had been carved out of ice, and her eyes were a steely silver color. This silver-eyed woman stood there in the center, the other two standing by her side.

“Welcome, distinguished cultivators and guests from many different territories. I shall be the one in charge of this treasure auction.” The silver-eyed woman had a smile on her face. “I imagine all of you are tired of waiting, so I won’t waste any time. Let the auction begin! The rules to the auction are quite simple. Every single treasure will have a reserve price, and every bid has to be at least one cube of chaos nectar higher than the previous bid.”

“Alright. Let the first item be brought out.”

The silver-eyed woman waved her crystalline, frozen arm. Instantly, a dried yellow wooden slip appeared in her hands, then levitated into the air. It rose to a height of roughly thirty meters, so as to allow all of the cultivators a clear line of sight to it.

“This is a piece of Soulguide Wood.” The silver-eyed woman smiled. “Soulguide Wood. Once it is lit, it will completely ignite and transform into a certain type of smoke. If you completely inhale all of the smoke, you’ll enter a deep slumber for a thousand years. Any cultivators whose hearts have been cast into shadow due to some event will find the shadow to be dramatically weakened and no longer pose a threat to them.”

“Soulguide Wood has a reserve price of twelve cubes of chaos nectar. Let the auction begin!”

“Fifteen cubes! The first bidder was an Elder God whose eyes were filled with desire.”

“Sixteen cubes.” A gray-robed Chaos Immortal called out calmly from a

different part of the hall. The Elder God immediately gritted his teeth helplessly. The reason why he had immediately increased the bid to fifteen cubes was because he wanted to scare off any bidders...but alas, everyone knew just how valuable Soulguide Wood was. How many Elder Gods could possibly win a bidding war against World-level figures?

"Seventeen cubes."

"Eighteen cubes."

Ning watched as the bidding proceeded, rather surprised. "Soulguide Wood? I didn't expect the first treasure to be such a valuable one."

When cultivators encountered certain types of setbacks, every so often a shadow would be cast over their heart. Sometimes, the shadow would be as strong as a demonheart curse. This would constantly disturb and nag at the cultivator, worrying away at him. Even if he was able to suppress it, he wouldn't be able to be truly at peace when meditating on the Dao, making it much more difficult for him to grow more powerful. However, Soulguide Wood would send the cultivator into a thousand-year slumber. Upon awakening, the cultivator would feel as though the shadow cast over his heart was something that had happened long, long ago. He would barely be able to remember it.

This was quite a marvelous treasure. Although it was comparable in value to most Dao weapons, it was incredibly rare. Normally, if a person wished to purchase this item within the Palace Opulentia, the Palace Opulentia would charge an extortionate price to help them even locate the item. The price would start off at fifty cubes at least! Sometimes, even organizations like the Badlands Court would find it difficult to acquire, making it truly expensive to purchase.

However, the prices offered at these treasure auctions were much lower.

This was the reason why even Daolords would come and take a look. They wanted to see if they could pick up something cheap.

"Thirty-two cubes. Any higher bids?" The silver-eyed woman glanced at the surrounding cultivators. "Since there are no higher bids..." As she spoke, the Soulguide Wood slowly began to float downwards. When it

landed in her hand, it represented this particular bidding cycle as having been completed.

The Soulguide Wood landed in her hands.

"Very well then. The Soulguide Wood is sold at thirty-two cubes," the silver-eyed woman said. The woman behind her immediately walked forward, accepting the Soulguide Wood and then taking it off the auction platform. She walked to the Elder God who had placed the final bid of thirty-two cubes.

Soulguide Wood was something which many Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals were desperately in need of.

Generally speaking, the higher one's level of insight into the Dao was, the more powerful their hearts were. It was very rare for World-level experts to have their hearts troubled by the demonheart, and even if they were the problem wouldn't be resolvable through usage of Soulguide Wood. If they truly did wish to buy Soulguide Wood, they could just spend fifty cubes to buy it at a later point in time. It was slightly cheaper now, which was why the Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals present were desperate to buy it.

Many of the World-level experts had merely watched. It wasn't yet time for them to make bids.

As for Ning, he also just watched from the third floor as well. He had sold off quite a few treasures for the sake of this treasure auction, precisely because he was waiting for rare, powerful items he needed to show up!

# Chapter 16: Wings

Thanks to the time he had spent in the Badlands Court, Ji Ning understood that each treasure auction would have many treasures for sale. Treasures of every single type would be sold, and so Ning sold off the vast majority of the treasures he had acquired in the Windsource Ruins. He had been planning on keeping the Eversnow Banner and the Rainbow Cloud World, but he ended up selling them as well.

The Eversnow Banner was quite useful. It had several sinfiends within it and could be used to trap enemies or test out dangerous regions. However, Ning deeply disliked sin treasures. He had planned on temporarily using it since he had a deficit of good treasures, but now that an abundance of treasures was coming towards him he was naturally going to sell it off to buy things he actually liked.

Although the Rainbow Cloud World was a domain-type artifact, Ning had no insights into the Dao of Mist at all. There was no way for Ning to even bind the layers of seals held within the Dao weapon and so he was only able to unleash a tiny fraction of its true power. He naturally chose to sell it as well.

The Eversnow Banner alone had been sold off for more than 150 cubes.

In short...Ning had sold off almost all of the treasures of those three World-level experts, save for the Mirrorsnow Painting and Rocky the stone titan. He had sold these treasures off to the Badlands Court, and since he was their respected guest they didn't try to make much money off of him. Ning was able to earn a total of 1580 cubes of chaos nectar. This was an enormous sum of money! However, it wouldn't be that impressive in the context of the treasure auction, and so he had to be very careful in how he spent his wealth.

"Violetjewel and the Mirrorsnow Painting are worth incredible amounts of chaos nectar, but they are very important to me." Ning continued to stare through the window towards the great hall below him.

The great hall was still filled with tens of thousands of seated

cultivators.

The silver-eyed woman took out one treasure after another, arousing waves of excited discussions.

In the blink of an eye, six hours had gone past. This was nothing more than the start, as every single treasure auction would go on for nearly ten days. Between the explanation phase and the bidding phase, every single treasure would take quite a bit of time. Even after a full day of auctioning, only a few hundred treasures had been sold off.

“This treasure.” The silver-eyed woman waved her hand, causing a white pair of wings to appear in her palms. The tiny, delicate little wings quickly flew into the air and began to expand in size. When it reached a height of thirty meters, it was roughly as tall as a normal human. It emanated waves of strange ripples as it constantly phased in and out of existence.

“This is a high-grade Dao treasure known as the Voidsea Wings. It is filled with many divine runes that embody the profound mysteries of space and is suitable for cultivators who cultivate the Dao of Spacetime.” The silver-eyed woman continued, “With this set of wings, you’ll be able to fly incredibly fast. When engaged in close combat, you’ll be able to move much more agilely.”

“The Voidsea Wings have a reserve price of thirty cubes of chaos nectar. Let the bidding begin!” The silver-eyed woman called out.

“Thirty cubes.”

“Thirty-one cubes.”

“Thirty-five cubes.”

Instantly, quite a few cultivators began to fight over the treasure. Treasures that could increase one’s agility in combat were actually very important, especially since they could also be vital when fleeing from danger.

These wings could allow one to fly much faster and also made one much more agile. Although it was merely a high-grade Dao treasure, it was even more rare and valuable than most top-grade Dao weapons.

The third floor.

"Master, don't you need treasures like this?" Su Youji asked.

"Let's wait for a bit longer. I imagine there will be even better treasures later." Ning frowned. He did want a set of wings, because his path was the path of close combat, but his greatest skill lay in the Dao of the Sword. Although he did have some insights into lightning, water, and space, they were significantly weaker than his insights into the Dao of the Sword.

Strictly speaking, his most powerful Dao was the Dao of the Sword, the second was the Dao of Lightning, the third was the Dao of Water, and the last one was the Dao of Space...

The divine runes that had been imprinted into those Voidsea Wings were undoubtedly quite abstruse and profound. Given his limited skill in the Dao of Space, he probably would only be able to unleash a fraction of the full power of that set of wings.

"Sixty-nine cubes. Any higher bids?" The silver-eyed woman glanced at the surrounding people as the pair of wings in the air began to slowly descend from its height of thirty meters, shrinking as it did so. Finally, it landed in her palms. "The auction is complete. The Voidsea Wings have been sold for sixty-nine cubes."

One of the female Immortals behind her immediately took the wings and delivered them to the winning bidder.

Ning continued to watch. He had yet to make a single bid, because there was nothing that had truly excited him thus far. There was no need for him to buy a treasure that wasn't a perfect fit for him. With enough chaos nectar on hand, he would have plenty of other chances to purchase what he needed.

"If push comes to shove, I'll buy a boat-type treasure that's meant for fleeing," Ning mused to himself. "Even if I'm not as agile as I would be with those wings, my sword-arts will ensure that I have nothing to fear."

This was his backup plan.

The treasure auction continued for another two hours.

"This is the fifth set of wings to appear in this treasure auction. This is also a pair of high-grade Dao wings, and it is known as the Thunderlight Wings." The silver-eyed woman waved her hand as her voice echoed within the great hall.

"Thunderlight?"

Ning's ears twitched.

For the sake of mastering a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent, Ning had transformed his body to give it an even higher affinity for lightning than Exalted Celestial Thundergod. His improvement in the Dao of Lightning was quite fast, on the same level as his improvement in the element of water. It was second only to the Dao of the Sword.

"Is that..." Ning stared from afar as a set of azure wings appeared in the silver-eyed woman's hands. The wings appeared to spark and hum with electric light.

"Thunderlight Wings are powered by lightning and use sword-light to tear through all obstacles, allowing the wielder to move at tremendous speeds. It is highly suited for both close combat and evasive techniques. It is a perfect fit for cultivators who are skilled in both the Dao of the Sword and the Dao of Lightning," the silver-eyed woman said.

Ning shot up, his eyes gleaming as he stared through the window.  
"That's the one!"

The Thunderlight Wings were actually even tougher to use than the Voidsea Wings. There were quite a few cultivators who were skilled in the Dao of Space, the Dao of Lightning, and the Dao of the Sword, but fairly few who were skilled in both the sword and in lightning.

However, a treasure which was able to join together two different Daos would generally be even more astonishingly powerful than 'normal' treasures of that type.

"The Thunderlight Wings have a reserve price of thirty-six cubes of chaos nectar. Let the bidding begin," the silver-eyed woman said.

"Thirty-eight cubes."

“Forty cubes.”

“Forty-five cubes.”

Quite a few World Gods began to make their bids, the price rising much faster than the price for the Voidsea Wings had. Although fewer cultivators were able to use these Thunderlight Wings, there were so many World Gods present that there were multiple figures here who were skilled in both lightning and the sword. Under normal circumstances, Waveshift City didn’t have many Dao treasures for sale. Wing-type Dao treasures were even rarer, and dual-affinity ones such as this almost never showed up.

“The bidding war is pretty fierce.” Ning frowned slightly, then spoke out and made his first bid. “Fifty cubes!”

His voice rang out from the third floor, causing quite a few cultivators to turn their heads in his direction.

“That’s the third floor.”

“He must be a disciple of the Badlands Court.”

“So what if he is? Fifty-two cubes!”

“Fifty-five cubes.”

“Sixty cubes.”

“Sixty-five cubes.”

The bidding war grew increasingly intense.

“Seventy-two cubes.” Ning raised the price, making his second bid. This pair of wings were extremely hard to design and quite complicated to forge. They rarely showed up in the marketplace. If he used them, his ability and his speed would both increase dramatically. Ning would not accept no for an answer!

“Seventy-three cubes.”

“Seventy-four cubes.”

The bidding speed began to slow down. There was a limit to how much

anyone would pay for a high-grade Dao treasure; in the end, they could try to find and buy one during the next treasure auction. Waveshift City would hold ten of them each chaos cycle, after all.

“Seventy-six cubes.”

Ning frowned slightly, then spoke out for a third time. “Eighty cubes!”

The entire hall fell silent. No further bids came. Eighty cubes appeared to be the ceiling. It must be understood that the stone titan Ning had acquired was itself worth merely a hundred cubes.

“Eighty cubes. Any higher bids?” The set of azure Thunderlight Wings continued to hover above the silver-eyed woman, but a moment later it began to slowly descend. Finally, it landed in her hands. “Bidding is now closed. The Thunderlight Wings have been sold for eighty cubes.”

On the third floor, Ning let out a sigh of relief and revealed a hint of a smile. The highest possible price he was willing to pay was actually a hundred cubes of chaos nectar. Other cultivators and World-level experts had been around for a long time and were willing to wait; there were ten of these auctions each chaos cycle, after all. They wouldn’t be willing to pay too high a price. Ning, however, wasn’t willing to wait. By the time the next treasure auction came around, he would probably be a World-level expert himself!

“Eighty cubes for a set of wings that are a perfect fit for me. I’m satisfied.” Ning secretly celebrated.

“Congratulations, Master.” Elder God Wilddog hurriedly congratulated Ning.

“Congratulations, Master. You were silent for so long, but when you found something you liked you stopped at nothing to take it.” The Flamefairy smiled as well.

“We are just getting started. This was just a warmup.” Ning grinned. This set of wings had only cost him eighty cubes of chaos nectar. He had prepared more than a thousand cubes for this auction, and the best treasures had yet to appear! Supposedly, there were some treasures that

would cause even Samsara Daolords to grow intrigued.

# Chapter 17: Aquaflect

One treasure after another was sold off. Of course, there was also the occasional treasure which had no bidders at all.

Three days of bidding passed in the blink of an eye, with the cultivators in the hall growing increasingly excited. Increasingly unique treasures were beginning to come out, as many of the best treasures had been saved for last.

“This next treasure is a suit of armor.” The silver-eyed female Immortal smiled, her voice echoing within the ears of the tens of thousands of cultivators present. “This is the most unique set of armor we have for sale in this treasure auction.”

“Oh?” The eyes of quite a few people lit up as they began to listen carefully.

Ji Ning listened carefully as well.

“The most unique set of armor?” The Daolords seated at the top floor also glanced downwards towards the great hall.

“Little sister Thousand Shadows, what’s so unique about this armor?” Waterwind asked curiously.

The white-robed Daolord Thousand Shadows smiled. “Just keep watching, big brother. You know the rules! No leaks are permitted regarding the treasures for sale during any treasure auction.”

“Fine, let’s see what this treasure is.” Daolord Dracogod smiled as well.

Daolord Badlands and his wife watched curiously as well.

“Armor as precious as this is rarely seen during the various treasure auctions that have been held in these territories during recent chaos cycles. For me, at least, this is the first time I’m seeing such a precious treasure appear in an auction that I’m officiating over.” The words of the silver-eyed woman caused the cultivators present to feel even more intrigued. What was so rare and special about this armor?

"I imagine some of you have heard of this type of armor, but few of you have ever seen it."

The silver-eyed woman waved her crystalline arm, causing a tiny suit of armor to appear in her palm. As the suit of armor floated into the air, it quickly expanded in size. The armor looked quite ordinary, but it was covered by a layer of icy frost.

"This suit of armor is known as the Frosthorn Robe." The silver-eyed woman laughed. "It is suitable for cultivators skilled in the Dao of Water. It admittedly looks quite ordinary, and it is nothing more than a suit of top-grade Dao armor."

"But...it has the 'reflect damage' property."

"Any attacks, close range or longe range, that land on this suit of armor will result in an equal amount of damage being reflected onto the attacker."

As soon as her words came out, the entire hall exploded into a shocked clamor.

"An equal amount of damage reflected!?" All of the cultivators were stunned. So if an enemy launched a full-force attack against you, your armor would automatically cause them to suffer an attack of the exact same level of power? How would you even try to fight against someone with this armor in close combat?

"With armor like this, World Gods that are skilled in close combat can even fight back against experts at a higher level of power."

"This is crazy."

World Gods generally all had incredibly tough bodies as well as top-grade Dao armors protecting them. Generally speaking, even World-level opponents who were one or two classes of power above them in strength would find it difficult to annihilate them in one blow. If their opponent was not only unable to slay them in one blow but would also suffer damage reflection...even foes stronger than the armor-bearers would find actually fighting them to be a painful experience.

Ning began to grow excited as well. This was definitely a set of armor that was perfect for anyone who specialized in close combat. Ning's own body was very tough, especially when reinforced by the azureflower mist energy. Once he became a World God, he would become even more formidable in this regard! Him acquiring this set of armor would be like a tiger being given wings.

"Aquaflect?" The Daolords on the top floor, however, were all puzzled.

"So it's just water-element damage reflection." Daolord Dracogod frowned. "Although aquaflect armor is fairly rare, there's one or two for sale in every treasure auction. Daolord Thousand Shadows, your subordinate is bragging a bit too much. Why did she say that this item is something that is all but unmatched in value in treasure auctions hosted during recent chaos cycles? She even claimed that this was the first time she ever encountered such an item while hosting an auction. Is this her first time being the auction mistress?"

"Aquaflect?"

Azuresky, Waterwind, and the Badlands couple were all puzzled as well. While the World Gods were all excited, this item wasn't that exciting to Daolords like them.

"She's hosted at least a hundred treasure auctions." Daolord Thousand Shadows gave Daolord Dracogod a cold sideways glance. "If you aren't impressed, don't bid on it."

"Don't bid on it?" Daolord Dracogod was stunned. What was that supposed to mean? Was there something about this suit of armor that would attract his interest? Was this a joke? He was a venerable Daolord; all his items were of the Eternal level!

"The divine seals embedded into this armor are incomparably profound," the silver-eyed woman said in a loud voice. "It contains seven layers of seals. World-level cultivators with complete mastery over water might be able to completely bind all seven seals...and if they do so, when they put on these robes they will be able to generate a Frosthorn Domain."

"The Frosthorn Domain will span up to ten thousand kilometers."

“Any attacks launched within this domain will result in full-force damage reflection.”

“The Frosthorn Robes have a reserve price of five thousand cubes of chaos nectar.” The silver-eyed woman smiled. “Let the bidding begin!”

Everyone in the great hall was silent.

Five thousand?

Was this a joke?

“Why the hell is it so expensive?” Ning had been debating buying the treasure, but he was instantly stupefied by the price. Five thousand cubes? He didn’t even have close to that much! And, based on what he knew, ten thousand cubes was enough to purchase an Eternal weapon!

For even the reserve price to be so high meant that this treasure was just as valuable as an Eternal weapon.

“Why the hell is it so expensive?”

“I saw a suit of aquaflect armor during the last treasure auction as well. It wasn’t nearly this expensive.”

“This is ridiculous.”

“Even Elder God Formations start off with a reserve price of around 150 cubes during these auctions.”

The tens of thousands of cultivators in the hall were all silent for a moment. Then, they started to stealthily discuss this matter amongst themselves. It must be understood that ordinary top-grade Dao weapons were only worth a few dozen cubes at most! This was the price which Ning had been given for the warblade he had sold off. The Eversnow Banner held nine sinfiends within it, which was why it went for one or two hundred cubes of chaos nectar. Even complete sets of top-grade Dao weapons would generally go for a few hundred cubes at most.

Five thousand cubes?

This was a price that would render 99% of World-level experts completely speechless.

“Ten thousand cubes!”

“Twelve thousand cubes!”

“Daolord Dracogod, I thought you weren’t impressed with it? Fifteen thousand cubes!”

A rapid-fire series of bids began to ring out from the top floor of the auction hall. Everyone, Ning included, felt an enormous sense of pressure pushing down upon them.

There were quite a few terrifyingly powerful World Gods here, including some who were stronger than even World God Northrest. This was a gathering of the majority of the World-level experts from all the nearby territories, after all. Some of them were able to afford this price, but...was it really worth it? For just a top-grade set of Dao armor?

The top floor.

“Daolord Thousand Shadows, your insights into the element of water aren’t as profound as mine. Stop fighting with me over this.” Daolord Dracogod chuckled, then called out once more, “Eighteen thousand cubes.”

“Dracogod, you brat.” Waterwind spoke out, causing Daolord Dracogod’s face to turn dark. However, Waterwind was unquestionably more powerful than him. “Stop fighting with my little sister Thousand Shadows. Although this set of top-grade Dao armor has seven seals within it, didn’t you hear that only World-level cultivators who have reached the level of full mastery over the Dao of Water are able to bind all seven seals? My little sister is definitely capable of that.”

“If I wasn’t bound by the rules of our organization, I would’ve taken this treasure away long ago. There’s no way I would’ve let it show up on the floor of the auction hall.” Daolord Thousand Shadows glanced at Daolord Dracogod. Although she was in charge of this expedition, she didn’t dare to violate any of the rules. No information regarding the treasures was to be leaked, and all treasures had to be bid in a fair fashion during the actual auction itself.

This was a rule that had existed for countless chaos cycles.

“Twenty thousand cubes.” Daolord Thousand Shadows raised the price again.

“Twenty-one thousand cubes.” Daolord Dracogod immediately countered.

“Sorry, Yan’er. Nothing I can do.” Daolord Badlands looked at his wife.

“Forget it. I rarely go out into battle anyhow.” His beautiful wife laughed.

“Frosthorn Domain...who the hell managed to create something like this?” Daolord Badlands let out a sigh. “So long as you are in the range of this domain, each time you launch an attack you’ll immediately suffer from damage reflection. It’ll only end when you stop trying to attack! Even though this domain will have less of an impact on a powerful Daolord, he’ll still see his strength whittled away by more than half as his attacks travel through it.”

Once the Frosthorn Domain appeared, it would initiate a series of counter-attacks. Daolords could use the power of the counter-attacks to whittle away at the strength of the enemy’s blows. This effect alone ensured that the item would be a valuable one.

“Thirty-eight thousand cubes.”

“Forty thousand cubes.”

Daolord Dracogod and Daolord Thousand Shadows were completely at odds now. As Samsara Daolords, these two were neither particularly weak nor particularly strong. This was why they both desperately needed treasures like this one! As for the likes of Daolord Badlands, Azuresky, or Waterwind, any foes that might prove to be a threat to them wouldn’t be threatened by a mere Frosthorn Domain.

“Fifty thousand cubes.” Daolord Thousand Shadows made yet another bid.

“Damn.” Daolord Dracogod’s face was ashen. He had originally planned to just watch the treasure auction and see if he could pick up something

cheap, and so he hadn't prepared a particularly large amount of chaos nectar. However, Daolord Thousand Shadows had been in charge of escorting this mission! Although she couldn't tell others about the treasures under her protection, she herself knew that this suit of armor was within it. Thus, she had prepared more than enough chaos nectar.

In truth, she wasn't really getting much of a bargain, as this was the 'standard' price for an item of this nature. However, as the silver-eyed auction mistress had said...this type of armor was rarely available for sale! It truly was incredibly rare! It was a fairly cheap yet extremely effective item for Daolords, perfect for Daolords of average strength such as the two of them.

In the end, the Frosthorn Robe was sold for fifty thousand cubes of chaos nectar. The many cultivators present were all stunned by this price, especially the Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals.

Six more hours passed.

"This treasure is another set of armor. It is known as the Primalwater Armor, and it also has the aquaflect property." The silver-eyed woman continued, "However, this set of armor only has three seals inside of it, and so it will only generate the damage reflection property when an attack actually lands upon it. It won't generate a domain like the Frosthorn Domain we previously discussed."

As she spoke, she waved her hand and caused a suit of armor to fly out of her palm. This armor was silvery-white and looked a bit more beautiful than the Frosthorn Robe.

The suit of armor flew into the air, expanding as it flew upwards. It immediately attracted the attention of many cultivators, Ning included.

"The Primalwater Armor's reserve price is two hundred cubes of chaos nectar. Let the bidding begin!" The silver-eyed woman said.

Ning let out a sigh of relief.

This was a more 'normal' price!

# Chapter 18: Completely Broke

As soon as the silver-eyed woman stopped talking, the cultivators in the hall all began to call out, especially the World Gods. “Two hundred and twenty cubes!”

“Two hundred thirty.”

“Two hundred forty!”

The price rapidly began to rise.

As for Ji Ning, he watched silently from the third floor even though he also desired this item quite badly. There were a number of World Gods in the great hall who were interested but were in no rush to make a bid. Most of the initial bidders were just trying to see if they could pick it up on the cheap, as most ‘normal’ top-grade Dao armors would go for at least three hundred cubes.

Top-grade Dao armor with the aquaflect property would naturally be worth much more.

“Three hundred twenty.”

“Five hundred!” Suddenly, a deep voice rang out. It came from a muscular alien World God whose entire body was covered with fiery red scales, and with his growling bid the price instantly rocketed up to five hundred cubes.

The hall grew much quieter.

There were ‘customary’ prices for most magic treasures. Ordinary top-grade Dao armor would go for around three hundred cubes, while something like this Primalwater Armor would go for around six hundred cubes or so.

“Five hundred and ten.”

“The disciples of the Badlands Court are truly impressive.” Many cultivators turned to look at the third floor. During this auction, many of the disciples of the Badlands Court remained silent until they chose to

make a bid, at which point they would stun everyone present. This was their territory, after all, and everyone would look at them when they bid from the third floor. They generally wanted to ensure that they would gain face from their bids.

“Six hundred cubes!” A World God seated in the great hall whose entire body was covered by a gray robe suddenly spoke out in an icy voice.

“Six hundred and ten cubes,” the fire-scaled alien World God snarled.

“Six hundred and twenty cubes,” the gray-robed World God bid.

The alien World God hesitated, not sure if he should continue.

“Six hundred and ninety cubes!” Ning made yet another bid.

This bid caused two other hesitating cultivators to fall silent. Ning’s bid had caused them to both change their minds. Although Primalwater Armor was rare, one or two would appear during each treasure auction, and they’d generally go for around six hundred cubes. Sometimes the price would a bit higher; other times, the price would be a bit lower. Six hundred and ninety cubes was fairly high.

“Forget it. Later I’ll go back and buy some World-level golems that can be used in a formation. They’ll cost the same amount and will be a bit more useful to me than this armor.”

“Forget it.”

Quite a few World Gods began to talk themselves down from joining the bidding. This was an enormous sum of money, after all. The combined treasures which Ning had initially acquired from Immortal Origination and Immortal Bloodpool in the Windsource Ruins weren’t worth as much as this single suit of armor. The only reason why Ning was able to afford it was because World God Cavecry had left behind some nice treasures as well.

“Six hundred and ninety cubes. Any higher bids?” The silver-eyed woman spoke out as the suit of armor began to descend towards her palm. Finally, it came to a rest. “This suit of Primalwater Armor has been sold. The bidding is over.”

“Whew.” Ning let out a sigh of relief, sitting down and picking up a glass of wine. He took a small sip of it. Just now, he had been so nervous that he had jumped to his feet. He knew very well that the only reason why he had so much chaos nectar was thanks to Daolord Solesky. If it wasn’t for him, who knew how long it would’ve taken for Ning to acquire so much wealth?

“Congratulations, Master.” Elder God Wilddog spoke out.

“I imagine there aren’t many World Gods who can afford a treasure like this,” Su Youji said.

Ning chuckled.

Strictly speaking, for now, this suit of armor wouldn’t be as helpful to him as seven hundred cubes worth of bugbeasts or golems. For example, Ning could’ve purchased thirty-six sinfiends like the ones he had sold off! Generally speaking, most World-level experts would purchase quite a few bugbeasts or sets of golems.

Golems were magic treasures that could be deployed in formations, after all. An entire set of five or six golems in a formation would prove to be extraordinarily powerful.

“Fellow Daoist.” A soft voice rang out from outside.

“Come in,” Ning said.

Creeeek. The door swung open and a woman walked in holding the suit of armor. Smiling, she said, “Primalwater Armor, six hundred and ninety cubes.”

“Right.” Ning tossed out a storage treasure.

The woman accepted it, glanced at it, then placed the suit of armor on the table and departed.

Ning reached out to gently stroke the suit of silver armor, filling it with his divine power. He was able to bind it quite easily. Whoosh. The armor instantly appeared over his body, while the set of high-grade Dao armor Ning had previously been wearing was put away.

"I have Violetjewel as my weapon and the Primalwater Armor as my armor. For agility and evasion, I have the Thunderlight Wings." Ning nodded slowly to himself. "Given my sword-arts have improved during this period of time I spent at the Badlands Court...I'll wager only master-class World Gods are capable of suppressing me in might."

Ning had already used up nearly half of his chaos nectar. He was in no rush to make any further bids.

The treasure auction continued to proceed day by day, and many new marvelous items appeared. Ning's horizons were truly broadened. Only now did he understand how many treasures the Endless Territories possessed! The World-level experts he had previously encountered, such as God Emperor Blacklotus, were actually nothing more than failures. Truly powerful cultivators would be able to wield their treasures to absolutely devastating effect.

On the seventh day of the treasure auction, Ning purchased yet another treasure. A Pentabolt Gourd!

The Pentabolt Gourd was filled with five different types of divine chaos lightning. In truth, a single one of those five types of lightning was enough to utterly devastate anyone below the World level of power, but against World Gods and Chaos Immortals it wouldn't be of much use. The Pentabolt Gourd, however, mixed all five types of chaos lightning together. It was enough to threaten the lives of weaker World-level experts, and even powerful ones would be entangled and ensnared by them.

"The Pentabolt Gourd can be used to launch group attacks. Even if I can't kill my foes, I can slow them down." Ning nodded to himself.

Ning had spent a total of 180 cubes to purchase the Pentabolt Gourd.

The eighth day of the treasure auction.

"This next treasure is a set of three golems." The silver-eyed woman waved her hand, causing three fiery golems to appear in her palms before slowly levitating into the air. "However, these golems are unlike ordinary golems! They don't have any treasure spirits within them, but they do have a compartment which a cultivator can enter and control them through."

“When these three golems come together into a formation, their defensive powers will increase exponentially.”

“This set of golems has a reserve price of three hundred cubes. Let the bidding begin!” The silver-eyed woman said.

Instantly, quite a few cultivators began to make their bids.

These golems that could hold cultivators inside them were very popular amongst Chaos Immortals. Chaos Immortals had fragile bodies, but when they were inside golems they would be fairly safe! In addition, golems that fought on their own usually did so in clumsy ways. Cultivators had much higher levels of insight into the Dao; when they personally commanded a golem, it was only natural for the golem to be capable of much greater power.

However, there was a weakness!

Ning’s own stone titan golem was able to fight alongside him; the two were able to surround and pincer-attack a foe together. If Ning was to enter a golem, the fight would turn into a one-on-one fight.

“Three hundred and sixty cubes.”

“Three hundred and seventy cubes.”

Ning was rather nervous. Twelve hours ago, a set of five similar golems had appeared. Ning had made multiple bids, but in the end the price had risen to over eight hundred cubes. Ning only had roughly six hundred cubes left!

“I have to win this time,” Ning mused to himself. If he let his powerful Elder Gods or Ancestral Immortals control these three golems, they would actually be a bit more powerful than the stone titan was. Ning would then have much more resources at his disposal if he encountered dangerous situations when adventuring.

Originally, Ning had been planning on buying a Minor Thousand Elder Gods Formation.

At this treasure auction, around two hundred cubes would be enough to

procure one of these formations! As for the thousand Elder God slaves needed to operate it, they could be purchased for a hundred cubes. Three hundred cubes would translate into an army of Elder God slaves who were able to join together into a formation. However, by comparison the set of three golems was even more attractive to Ning, even though they were somewhat more expensive.

“Five hundred cubes.”

“Five hundred and ten cubes.”

The price continued to rise.

“Six hundred cubes!” Ning said. He only had a bit over six hundred cubes left.

A momentary silence.

The silver-eyed woman glanced at the people nearby, then said, “Six hundred cubes of chaos nectar. Any higher bids?” The three golems began to slowly descend from midair.

“Six hundred and ten cubes!” Suddenly, a green-robed Chaos Immortal located in the corner of the hall gritted his teeth and place a bid.

“Six hundred and twenty cubes!” Ning almost immediately raised his bid once more.

The green-robed Chaos Immortal raised his head to glance at Ning. He didn’t say a thing.

The silver-eyed woman continued to ask for more bidders as the three golems began their descent. Finally, they landed in her palm. “This set of golems has been sold for six hundred and twenty cubes! The bidding is complete.”

Ning was standing at the window, staring down towards the great hall. He broke out into a grin.

It was enough.

Daolord Solesky wouldn’t be around to help him out. Ning would go out adventuring by himself, and he had spent all of his chaos nectar to buy

what he needed. He had acquired enough from this treasure auction.

"I'm completely broke now." Ning sat down to simply watch. This treasure auction would no longer mean much to him.

# Chapter 19: Pseudo Samsara Pill

Ji Ning had also acquired a certain amount of chaos nectar and chaos jewels from the corpses of the three deceased World-level experts of the Windsource Realms. As a result, Ning still had roughly fifty cubes worth of chaos nectar left. However, such a small amount wouldn't be enough to purchase any truly powerful items at this auction. It was better to hold onto them for now. If he ended up being heavily injured, he could use the chaos nectar to heal himself and save his life! This wouldn't pose any burden to him and the healing effect would be quite quick.

The only things he really had to worry about were strange toxins, curse-spells from major powers, or attacks that caused the truesoul to crumble. It was hard to use chaos nectar to heal damage inflicted to the truesoul, but almost all other types of injuries could be healed.

"Everyone, there are only nine treasures left in this treasure auction."

On the ninth day of the treasure auction, the mood in the hall noticeably grew more exuberant. The past few treasures had all sold for more than a thousand cubes or had been listed with such a high reserve price that over half of them hadn't been sold. They were simply too expensive! Only someone truly in desperate need of them would purchase them.

"The first of the final nine is an Eternal weapon, a greataxe-type weapon. This is a weapon suitable for Earth-attribute cultivators to use. This weapon possesses tremendous power and the quintessence core within it is so strong that we rank this weapon as high-grade." The silver-eyed woman produced a small black hatchet in her hands. As it rose into the air, it quickly expanded in size as it began to emanate waves of overpowering majesty, causing all of the cultivators in the great hall to feel a sense of tremendous pressure.

"This is an Eternal weapon, the 'Three Extinctions Axe'. The reserve price is fifty thousand cubes. Let the bidding begin!"

All of the cultivators were silent. Even the Daolords on the top floor were silent.

And so...

No bids were placed.

It wasn't that there was anything wrong with the treasure. It was that it was just too expensive! It was beyond what the vast majority of World-level cultivators could afford...and quite frankly, most World-level cultivators had no need of such a high quality Eternal weapon. They wouldn't even be able to unleash much of its power! It was quite unlikely for a World-level cultivator to be able to unleash the full force of a high-grade Eternal weapon.

Thus, even the most powerful of World-level cultivators generally preferred to use low-grade Eternal weapons. Power only mattered if you could actually command it and wield it! If you couldn't, what good would it do you?

"The second of the final nine..." The silver-eyed woman didn't seem surprised.

During each treasure auction, the final nine treasures would be truly fine specimens that were worth at least ten thousand cubes of chaos nectar. Thus, there were rarely any bidders on them.

This time, there were bids on the fifth and sixth treasures, but the bids all came from the top floor.

The fifth treasure was a drop of blood that was the size of a man's head. It glimmered with azure light and radiated with an aura of tremendous power. The silver-eyed woman simply described it as being a drop of essence-blood from a Chaos Godbeast, giving no further information about it. In the end, it was purchased by Daolord Waterwind for a price of 83,000 cubes!

The sixth treasure was a stone statue. The silver-eyed woman had given even less information about it: "This stone statue is filled with boundless mysteries. The reserve price is 80,000 cubes. Let the bidding begin." In the end, Daolord Azuresky had purchased it at the reserve price.

The seventh treasure...no bids.

The eighth treasure...still no bids.

"Alright. We have now come to the final treasure of this treasure auction." As the silver-eyed woman's words came out, the atmosphere in the great hall began to change. The tension was so palpable and thick, you could cut it with a knife.

The eyes of all the cultivators had lit up. In fact, some were unable to even breathe.

"Can it be true...?"

Su Youji and Elder God Wilddog stared unblinkingly at the great hall below. Ning did the same.

"You won't be disappointed." The silver-eyed woman smiled. "The final treasure up for sale in this treasure auction...is a single Pseudo Samsara pill!"

.....

"It really is a Pseudo Samsara pill!?" A white-haired woman in a room on the second floor had an utterly terrifying look in her eyes.

.....

"What a wonderful coincidence. I just acquired a large amount of chaos nectar, and the very first treasure auction I go to has a Pseudo Samsara pill for sale. I have to have it." In another room on the second floor, a handsome man dressed in fiery red robes had a similarly terrifying look of lust in his eyes.

.....

"Please don't fight me over it. Please don't fight me over it. Gotta have it. Gotta have it." A wild-haired youth was muttering these words feverishly to himself, a look of madness in his eyes.

.....

"A Pseudo Samsara pill." The silver-eyed woman smiled as she swept the entire great hall with her gaze. "I imagine all of you know what it does. Let me remind everyone of the rules pertaining to this pill! Only those who

have reached the level of full mastery as World-level experts can use Pseudo Samsara pills. This pill shall guide cultivators into finding their own Dao, letting them break through their bottleneck and become a Samsara Daolord."

"What?! It allows World Gods to become Samsara Daolords?!?"

"A single pill?"

"The path of cultivation is an incredibly arduous one. How could a single pill have such monstrous power?" The cultivators hearing about Pseudo Samsara pills for the first time, especially the Elder Gods and the Ancestral Immortals, were utterly speechless.

Ji Ning, Su Youji, and Elder God Wilddog sighed in amazement from their room on the third floor. During the time they spent at the Badlands Court, they had learned that there was a very small chance that the final item for sale during each treasure auction would be a Pseudo Samsara pill! However, this truly was quite rare; less than one in a thousand treasure auctions would feature a Pseudo Samsara pill.

However, this was virtually the only chance World-level cultivators would have to purchase one of these pills. They were never sold on the ordinary market. They only ever appeared during the treasure auction!

This was one of the reasons why so many World-level cultivators from neighboring territories had hastened here upon hearing that a treasure auction was going to be held soon.

When master-class World-level experts used the Pseudo Samsara pill, they would have a better than 99% chance of becoming Samsara Daolords. It was all but guaranteed.

"So pills like this really do exist. When I first heard of them, I really couldn't believe it," Ning murmured softly to himself.

"The endless primordial chaos is filled with endless possibilities." Su Youji was uncharacteristically quiet.

"This is a pill that would drive any World God mad with lust," Elder God Wilddog muttered.

Ning nodded slowly.

As for the Daolords on the top floor, they were actually sighing in a rather disappointed way.

"Pseudo Samsara pills. I wonder what that Eternal Emperor was even thinking? To be skilled in the Dao of Alchemy is one thing, but why does he have to spend so much of his time making these Pseudo Samsara pills?" Azuresky shook his head and chuckled. "Pseudo Samsara pills are ruinous things. If you rely on one to become a Samsara Daolord, it is almost guaranteed that you will forever be stuck at the first step. Even if you have absolutely incredible luck, you would at most reach the second step. That will be a hard limit. Samsara Daolords move between life and death with each step. Weak Daolords like them will never have a chance of improving ever again. If they keep their head down, nothing bad will happen to them, but if they get too uppity..."

"The second step? I've never personally encountered anyone who used a Pseudo Samsara pill who could reach the second step." Waterwind shook his head.

"Look at the two of you go." Daolord Badlands laughed. "Yes, you feel disdain towards those pills, but the vast majority of World-level experts never stood a chance of becoming Samsara Daolords to begin with. They don't care how far they can progress after becoming Samsara Daolords; just becoming a Samsara Daolord is enough to satisfy them."

The silver-eyed auction mistress continued, "Let me warn everyone once more of the Pseudo Samsara pill's flaw. If you rely on it to become a Samsara Daolord, it'll be very, very hard for you to make any further improvements afterwards."

Flaw?

Who cared? Without it, most of them would never even be able to reach the Samsara Daolord to begin with.

"The reserve price is a hundred thousand cubes of chaos nectar. Let the bidding begin!" The silver-eyed woman announced.

“A hundred thousand cubes!” Instantly, a hoarse voice rang out from a room on the second floor.

“A hundred and ten thousand cubes!” An icy voice rang out from another nearby room.

“No...no...” The gray-robed, triangle-pupiled old man in the first room had a look of resentment and grief in his eyes. He didn’t have that much chaos nectar, just a hundred thousand cubes. He had gone to all of the treasure auctions in the surrounding territories after amassing this fortune, and on this trip, his third, he encountered a Pseudo Samsara pill. He made a bid at the reserve price, hoping no one would fight him for it, but...

Everyone who wanted a Pseudo Samsara pill knew exactly how much it was worth. Thus, whenever a treasure auction was being held, all the interested experts from the dozens of nearby territories would all hasten to the auction location.

This was one of the true reasons why treasure auctions were publicly announced ninety-nine years in advance.

The price continued to rise.

“A hundred and fifty thousand cubes!”

Each time one of these pills appeared, the price would be driven to a staggering level. Most Eternal weapons were worth just ten thousand cubes, while high-quality ones might be worth thirty or forty thousand cubes. Top-grade ones would generally go for around a hundred thousand cubes, and there were indeed some extremely powerful World-level experts who were capable of purchasing one or two of them. However, many of them saved their money instead...all for the sake of being able to afford a Pseudo Samsara pill!

Ning couldn’t help but sigh. Only someone who had been driven to despair would go so berserk over a pill.

God Emperor Blacklotus had an Eternal weapon, but it was merely a low-grade one that was worth twenty thousand cubes. He had no chance

of getting a Pseudo Samsara pill at all, as they would usually go for more than 160,000 cubes during the treasure auctions.

“168,000 cubes. Any higher bids?” The silver-eyed woman spoke out.  
“Then...the bidding for the Pseudo Samsara pill...is over!”

Her final words came out very slowly as she scanned the crowd for any more bids. This was the only treasure which they didn’t take out to physically show the cultivators present.

“Ahahahah! It’s mine! MINE! Ahahahahah!” Frenzied laughter rang out from the second floor. The bidders for the pseudo Samsara Pill had all been located on the second floor, choosing to hide their identities from the masses.

“I finally have it.” The handsome, fiery-robed man had a look of excitement in his eyes. “I’ll train to become a Samsara Daolord right here in Waveshift City. I have ten thousand cubes of chaos nectar left. I can even buy a weak Eternal weapon for myself to use!”

# Chapter 20: [Quintessence Sword-Intent]

## The First Stance

The treasure auction had come to an end!

After having experienced that great battle against God Emperor Blacklotus, Ji Ning had felt as though he now knew something of how the world worked...but now, he realized how truly vast the universe really was. There were many terrifying World-level experts skilled in formations or bugbeasts who could easily destroy him, to say nothing of Samsara Daolords.

"Let's follow the plan." Ning led Su Youji and Elder God Wilddog to move towards the other disciples of the Badlands Court. They jested and chatted amongst themselves as they headed back to the Court.

Swoosh.

Swoosh.

Swoosh.

Azuresky, Dracogod, Thousand Shadows, and Waterwind all began to depart as well. Azuresky and Thousand Shadows soared into the skies and left, while Dracogod was forced to use his legs to physically walk out of Waveshift City.

"Hmph." Daolord Dracogod glanced coldly at Waterwind and Thousand Shadows as they soared into the skies. Thousand Shadows didn't actually have the power to fly on this everworld by herself; it was Waterwind who was helping her do this.

"Thousand Shadows...that bitch. Hmph. All she can do is flatter and cozen up to Waterwind and the others. When the chance comes, I'll slaughter you myself." Daolord Dracogod then quickly hid the killing intent that had appeared in his eyes. He had given himself the name 'Dracogod', and getting a 'dragonification fruit' was an incredibly important part of his cultivation path. Alas, it had been seized by Daolord Thousand Shadows all those years ago.

He had many friends, true. But Daolord Thousand Shadows also had many friends of her own.

Daolord Dracogod deeply desired to kill Daolord Thousand Shadows. Alas, she was his equal in strength.

"She ruined my karmic luck! One day..." Daolord Dracogod strode through the land, quickly arriving at the spacetime transfer array and departing from the Badlands Territory.

.....

The Badlands Court. Within a quiet room inside the Water Curtain Home.

The Heavengazer Tower was located next to a prayer mat. Within the tower there was a golden leaf, which was itself an estate-world treasure.

Within the estate-world.

Whooooooosh. Waves gently lapped at the beach, caressing the sands before slowly retreating into the sea once more.

A white-robed Ning was seated on the beach in the lotus position, a blood-colored sword resting over his knees. He kept Violetjewel with him at all times so that he could be in constant communion with the sword's quintessence core and the exalted sword-intent within it. As a result, Ning's sword-arts were beginning to increasingly align with the core's murderous intent.

The [Nameless] sword-art...

Although it only had seven stances, Ning could tell from these seven stances that the creator of the sword-art had to be at least at the same level as the creator of Violetjewel. Both were definitely peerless powers who were skilled in the Dao of the Sword.

The sword-intent of Violetjewel's quintessence core was just as exalted as the sword-intent of the [Nameless] sword-art, even though these were two completely different interpretations of the Dao of the Sword.

"I'll meditate on both paths." Ning lowered his head to look at the blood-

colored sword resting across his knees. “In the future, I’ll definitely become a Samsara Daolord as well. I’ll have to find my own path.”

The [Nameless] sword-art’s path wasn’t his path.

Nor was Violetjewel’s quintessence core’s path his path.

Every single Daolord had to find a completely unique path that belonged to them alone. In the Endless Territories, there were no creatures who had souls or memories that were absolutely identical. By this same principle, no two Daolords could ever have exactly the same Daos. Even if both walked the path of the Dao of the Sword, their paths still would not be identical.

“The [Nameless] sword-art’s strength lies in its balance! Its very first stance, the ‘Heartsword’ stance, is a testament to this,” Ning mused to himself. “Although Violetjewel doesn’t have an actual sword-art connected to it, it does have an exalted sword-intent that I can meditate on. From this, I can tell that its greatest strength lies in its offensive attack power!”

This estate-world was more than a million kilometers in size. It was a top-grade Chaos treasure which had originally belonged to Immortal Origination and was the sturdiest estate-treasure Ning had access to. He usually had his servants and retainers live within this estate-world, and it even had many other living beings who flourished within it.

Ning continued to meditate on the sword by the beach, occasionally striding across the waves to stand upon the surface of the ocean as he trained.

Sword-light flew everywhere with wild abandon, causing the waves around them to be annihilated.

Day by day...

Year by year...

Ning continued his research into the [Nameless] sword-art and Violetjewel’s quintessence core. Every so often, he’d take a break and instead turn to researching the Daos of Water, Lightning, and Space.

Sometimes he'd even go strolling about the world of ordinary mortals who lived within this treasure. The living beings in this world were divided up amongst six continents and many islands, and each continent held an enormous number of individuals. They even had their own various religions, with the most powerful figures having just barely reached the Pure Yang True Immortal level.

Two hundred years passed in the blink of an eye.

Atop an island in the sea.

"Flamefairy, we're bored senseless in this estate-world."

"Right! Flamefairy, when will Master lead us out into the outside world?"

Eleven Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals were seated in a disorderly fashion, eating and drinking together. The most prominent figure within their ranks was Flamefairy Su Youji.

Ning generally kept the Flamefairy and Elder God Wilddog by his side. He had released many Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals from the prisonworld. Some had chosen to be stationed on the Windsource Chaosworld, while nine of them had chosen to follow Ning in his adventures. They normally were stationed here within this estate-world.

"How should I know?" Flamefairy Su Youji pointed towards a distant, small island located far away in the depths of the ocean. "Master is living right there on that island, but neither I nor Wilddog would dare to go there and disturb him without being summoned. When Master wants to come to us, he will. Let's just keep waiting."

"Ugh."

"No choice but to wait."

These Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals truly were quite bored. They all had their own estate-worlds, and they had already spent countless ages in the prisonworld diverting themselves by living amongst the mortals of their own estate-worlds. What they really wanted was action and excitement.

BOOM!

Suddenly, a terrifying wave of power swept over from afar.

“What?!” Su Youji, Elder God Wilddog, and the other nine Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals simultaneously rose to their feet. They turned to stare towards that distant island.

Whoosh.

A bloody streak of sword-light soared into the skies, spreading out into a rippling wave of power that caused all of them to quake.

“This wave...” Su Youji was the strongest of the eleven, but even she was so terrified that her heart quailed.

“What’s going on?” The more powerful figures who lived on the six continents and many islands of this estate-world all turned to stare at the same location! Although they couldn’t see anything physically, they could sense an utterly exalted and supremely terrifying sword-intent rising towards the heavens. Although the sword-intent was limited to this estate-world, all of the living creatures within it felt that it was something that was truly supreme and beyond all other power.

After this day, quite a few new Sword Immortals began to arise from within this estate-world. In fact, quite a few of its citizens began to sail off into the seas in search of the source of that sword-intent. Alas, they were never able to find it.

“Master is coming.” Su Youji and the other ten all stared off into the distance.

A white-robed youth was striding across the waves, an ordinary-looking blood-colored sword on his back. He soon arrived at their island.

“Greetings, Master.” Su Youji and the other ten all bowed respectfully.

“Mm.” Ning nodded.

“We’ve spent five hundred years here at the Badlands Court,” Ning said. “My sword-arts have now reached a bottleneck. It is time for us to go out adventuring.”

Five hundred years in the Badlands Court actually translated into more than ten thousand years within this estate-world.

"Master, just now...?" Su Youji's eyes were shining.

"I developed a sword-stance." Ning chuckled.

Alas, it wasn't the Great Firmament stance!

He had long ago reached a bottleneck in the [Nameless] sword-art. In recent years, Ning had turned most of his efforts towards understanding the quintessence core of Violetjewel. Today, he had developed a sword-art that had an incredibly powerful offensive potential. Ning called it the first stance of his [Sword Quintessence] - Blackmist stance!

"World God Blackmist..." Ning couldn't help but sigh to himself.

He would never be able to forget how he met this man after he had left the Three Realms. He would never be able to forget the sight of World God Blackmist slowly transforming into a statue. He had named this stance the 'Blackmist' stance in order to memorialize this deceased World God.

The creation of the Blackmist stance was the final result of the ten thousand years of hard work and effort Ning had spent within this estate-world!

"In terms of killing power, this stance should be quite close to the power of the 'Great Firmament' stance of the [Nameless] sword-art. Because I based it off Violetjewel's quintessence core, it'll actually make it easier for me to summon some of the core's power." Just now, Ning had tested that stance out. He was now able to summon more than ten times as much power from Violetjewel's quintessence core, and the power of his strike was definitely comparable to that of a master-class World God's strike.

Thanks to the azureflower mist energy strengthening his divine body, his body was comparable to a World God's body.

His sword-arts were comparable to an elite World God's techniques.

With the 'Blackmist' stance activating a good amount of his Eternal

weapon's quintessence core...Ning was now qualified to battle against master-class World Gods.

"It'll be hard for me to improve my sword-arts any further just by sitting here and studying on my own. It is time for me to leave this place." Ning glanced at Su Youji and the others, then instructed, "Youji, Wilddog, Blacksun, the three of you shall follow me."

"Yes." The Flamefairy and Wilddog were quite calm, but Elder God Blacksun was absolutely overjoyed.

Whoosh.

Ning led the three in departing from this place.

Ning had purchased those three mighty golems during the treasure auction. One was meant for the Flamefairy while the other was meant for Wilddog. As for the third, Ning had chosen to let Elder God Blacksun to command it. Elder God Blacksun was one of the most powerful Elder God retainers Ning had under his command, and he was also a bit more honest and obedient than the others. Ning preferred subordinates who were able to follow orders.

"Youji." They had returned to the Water Curtain Home inside the Badlands Court. "You can go and pay some visits to your friends in the Badlands Court. You can tell them that I am heading out towards the Allgod Estate."

"The Allgod Estate?" Su Youji was startled.

"Yes." Ning nodded.

"Alright. I'll make sure the entire Badlands Court knows." Su Youji laughed delightedly. She had far more friends here than Ning did, which was only natural; a woman of such charm and beauty would naturally be welcomed wherever she went.

"Also...I'm planning for us to leave three months from now," Ning said.

"Understood." Su Youji nodded.

# Chapter 21: Allgod Estate

Three months later.

A white-robed youth and a fat man whose eyes brimmed with flames were striding shoulder-to-shoulder across the surface of a lake, advancing across the waves as they departed from the Badlands Court.

“Brother Ji Ning, you picked something of a bad time.” The pudgy man chatted to Ning as they continued their journey forwards. “Quite a few people came back to the Badlands Court to take part in the treasure auction, but once it ended all of them quickly headed out to go adventuring. If you had spread the word right after the treasure auction that you had chosen to head to the Allgod Estate, at least four or five World-level experts would’ve chosen to go with you. But you instead chose to wait for more than two hundred years!”

The pudgy man chuckled. “Most of the people who wanted to go out already have.”

This pudgy man was quite an amiable fellow, even though he looked rather ugly due to the jagged scars and tattoos that lined his face. His eyes brimmed with flames, and his skin was suffused with a faint red color as well. Even when he was smiling, he still looked quite frightening.

“I still have you, senior apprentice-brother Dragonbinder.” Ning laughed.

“I purchased a treasure during the auction and spent a bit of time binding it. I was just about to head out anyhow. Our timing was perfect,” the pudgy man said.

The two moved across the ground, their bodies flickering like illusions as they advanced nonstop.

Ning had waited three months for word of his journey to spread, but only a single member of the Badlands Court had chosen to journey with him – the pudgy fellow next to him, World God Dragonbinder!

They entered the spacetime transfer array and left the Badlands

Everworld. They then boarded a flying ship, flew for several months, then finally reached the Allgod Estate.

The Allgod Chaosworld was an oceanic world. There were two great continents and a vast ocean that covered everything else. One continent held countless living beings while the other held the Allgod Estate.

Whooosh.

A cloud was floating through the skies. Ning and the pudgy man were standing atop the cloud, staring down at the vast world before them. They could vaguely make out the outlines of a towering edifice far off in the distance. That distant sight was enough to cause both Ning and World God Dragonbinder to feel breathless, as though they were staring upwards at something supreme.

“The Allgod Estate!” The pudgy man’s eyes blazed with fire as he stared at the great edifice. He said in a low voice, “Brother Ji Ning, we’ve been fairly relaxed on the way over. Now that we are about enter the Allgod Estate, though...I want to make a few things clear to you! Once we go in, we need to do exactly as we discussed. You can’t act rashly! If you do, then I’ll have to part ways with you.”

“Acting rashly in a place like this is suicide. Don’t worry, senior apprentice-brother Dragonbinder,” Ning said.

“Good.” The pudgy man nodded. In truth, he felt certain that Ning wouldn’t be so foolish. At the same time, he knew that unexpected things would sometimes happen! As a member of the Badlands Court, he was naturally quite a talented figure. He hadn’t trained for very long, but he had already become a master-class World God. If he was to lose his life due to an act of foolishness on the part of Ji Ning, how lamentable that would be!

“The Allgod Estate was created by Daolord Allgod,” the pudgy man said. “Daolord Allgod was an incredibly powerful Daolord. Although he failed his Daomerge, based on what I’ve learned I believe that he was a thousand times more powerful than other Daolords who were on the Verge of the Daomerge.”

"That much more powerful?" Ning was shocked. A thousand times?

This was insane!

Daolord Solesky himself had admitted that he was vastly inferior to Daolord Allgod. However, Ning didn't understand exactly how much more powerful Daolord Allgod had been. Even now, he could hardly believe what World God Dragonbinder was telling him. The difference in power was simply too great! If this was true, then it meant that Daolord Allgod had the power to easily slay other Daolords who were at the Verge.

"I'm not exaggerating. Although he failed his Daomerge, he once attacked and chased after an Eternal Emperor who had successfully completed his Daomerge. He pursued the man for multiple chaos cycles, and to this very day no one knows what happened to that Eternal Emperor." The pudgy man looked at Ning.

"He was really that powerful?!" Ning felt rather stunned. He only spent a brief period of time by Daolord Solesky's side and had spent most of his time at the Badlands Court in seclusion. Thus, he knew very little information regarding these mysterious, powerful figures. However, World God Dragonbinder was a true disciple of the Badlands Court who often conversed with his fellow cultivators. He knew quite a bit of 'secret' information.

"It is true. I once discussed this with our eldest disciple at the Court." World God Dragonbinder let out a sigh. "And...you should know that Daolords generally are afraid to try to enter the Allgod Estate."

The Allgod Estate was an extremely strange place.

30% of Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals were able to survive it, 50% of World-level experts were able to survive it, but...of the Daolords who dared to enter it, less than 10% would be able to emerge! This was an incredibly high casualty rate, making it so that not many Daolords dared to even attempt it.

"He was simply way too powerful!" World God Dragonbinder looked at Ning and smiled. "Although he's a bit ruthless towards other Daolords, he's quite benevolent towards World-level experts, Elder Gods, and

Ancestral Immortals. He left behind more than ten thousand treasures at the ‘Ten Thousand Mountains’ alone! Come, it is time for us to enter.”

“Alright.” Ning smiled as well.

Whoosh. Whoosh.

As the two simultaneously charged downwards, they suddenly encountered a region of twisted space. Moments later, both of them vanished.

Ning could sense space twisting around him. Moments later, he reappeared in the air with World God Dragonbinder next to him.

“How beautiful.” Ning saw a long, winding series of majestic mountains located in front of him. The mountains were all interconnected and seemed to form a long, sinuous coiling dragon.

“The Ten Thousand Mountains of the Allgod Estate,” World God Dragonbinder said softly.

“Right.” Ning stared at them from afar as well.

There were countless mountains before them. At the end of the mountains there was a region of endless mist...and beyond the ‘endless’ mist there was an utterly dazzling, eye-catching estate of vast proportions. This estate was simply too vast. Even though they were very far away, they could still make out its details quite clearly.

“I can sense it...” Ning could sense the Mirrorsnow Painting within his Jindan region was calling out joyfully, having sensed a faint resonance nearby.

“It should be up ahead. According to what big brother Solesky said, it should be within the center of the Fog Sea.” Ning stared at the endless Fog Sea located past the great mountains.

The outermost layer of the Allgod Estate consisted of the Ten Thousand Mountains. There were exactly ten thousand mountains in this region!

The second layer was the Fog Sea!

The core region was the actual, towering edifice known as the Castrum

Divinitus.

“Brother Ji Ning.” World God Dragonbinder looked at Ning. “Let’s try out the Ten Thousand Mountains first. After that, I’ll go to the Fog Sea by myself. You shouldn’t go there; it is far too dangerous a place for you.”

“Alright.” Ning nodded.

He had come here mainly because he wanted to acquire the Mirrorsnow Painting. Since the painting was located within the Fog Sea, he naturally had to enter it! However, he knew that World God Dragonbinder was looking out for his best interests. According to what the vast majority of cultivators had experienced, although Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals had a good chance of surviving the mountain region, they would almost certainly die upon entering the Fog Sea.

However, World-level experts stood a very good chance of surviving the Fog Sea.

“Let’s go,” World God Dragonbinder said.

Whoosh. Whoosh.

The two flew through the air towards the nearest mountain.

Based on what past cultivators had discovered, there were two fairly safe paths that could be followed through the Ten Thousand Mountains.

After the two landed atop the mountain, they began to advance through its forests. Watery waves spread out in constant ripples around them as they kept a close eye on their surroundings.

They travelled through one mountain after another.

They travelled cautiously and didn’t move too quickly. More than ten days passed in the blink of an eye, and they saw a number of Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals on their journey. However, all of them were so frightened upon seeing Ning and Dragonbinder that they immediately fled. Naturally, the two of them paid these minor figures no heed.

“Ji Ning, did you know? Every single mountain here holds the grave of a World-level expert,” World God Dragonbinder said.

"I've heard." Ning nodded. "According to the stories, after Daolord Allgod failed his Daomerge he began to wander through the Endless Territories as he searched for cultivators who had committed many grave sins. More than ten thousand World-level experts died by his hand! Every single mountain is the rest spot for at least one of those evil cultivators.

"My guess is that Daolord Allgod wanted to kill as many sinners as he could to accumulate more karmic virtue, hoping that he might be able to find a way to survive." World God Dragonbinder sighed. "But once you fail your Daomerge, your death becomes an inevitability. Many powerful experts have tried using various methods to stay alive...but alas, all of those efforts came to naught."

The two continued to walk while chatting.

"Eh?"

"Eh?"

Ning and World God Dragonbinder both came to a halt. They raised their head to stare off into the distance. The forest here was blocking their vision, but they were able to see a half-opened door that was covered with some divine runes and inscriptions.

"Is that the treasury?" Ning and Dragonbinder exchanged a curious glance.

Every single mountain of the Ten Thousand Mountains held the corpse of a sinful cultivator as well as a treasury! This meant that there were ten thousand treasures here...but the treasures were tightly guarded and not easily accessed. This mountain, however, had a great gateway carved into it, and the runes covering the gateway were even more profound than the ones used to forge Dao weapons. Clearly, this had to be a treasury!

"Let's go in and take a look," Dragonbinder sent mentally. "We've found the treasury, but we won't necessarily be able to take it with us. Plus, the 'real' treasury might be inside there."

"Alright. Let's go." Ning carefully scrutinized the great door as well."

# Chapter 22: Treasury

The great door was sixty meters tall and completely black. It was covered with complex silver runes that emanated ripples of might.

Ji Ning and World God Dragonbinder moved to stand directly in front of the great door.

“This is my first trip to the Allgod Estate.” World God Dragonbinder let out a sigh. “Just by looking at this door, I can tell that the legends of Daolord Allgod were probably all true! How could a mere door be this complex and profound? This is just one of ten thousand treasures located within these mountains, and yet its restrictive spells are incredibly complex.”

“Let’s go in,” Ning said with a laugh.

“Right.” World God Dragonbinder nodded.

The two advanced together into the deep, dark hallway past the door.

Rumble...

Ning glanced backwards. As expected, the great door had already closed behind them.

Based on the information Ning had previously purchased, there were ten thousand mountains here and every single mountain had a treasury within it. If anyone passed through a treasury door, the door would temporarily swing shut behind them so as to bar any other cultivators from entering! If Ning and World God Dragonbinder failed in acquiring the treasures located in the treasury, the door would swing open and release the two of them.

If they successfully acquired the treasures, then the entire treasury region would crumble apart and reveal a different hallway that would grant them safe departure.

“There is light up ahead.” Ning sped up just slightly.

“There shouldn’t be any traps.” World God Dragonbinder was quite

excited as well.

The two quickly reached the end of this first hallway. Before them was a spacious region that was roughly thirty kilometers in size and filled with a layer of blurry light.

"This is the treasury region." World God Dragonbinder revealed a look of excitement. "This treasury region is still intact. That means it still holds its treasures."

"The treasures are hard to win. Less than one in ten thousand cultivators will succeed in their attempts." Ning couldn't help but sigh. Although the trials were quite difficult, so long as the door remained open and a steady stream of cultivators continued to enter this place, sooner or later there would be a successful trial-taker.

Whoosh. Whoosh.

Ning and World God Dragonbinder entered the treasury region of blurry light. Both of them grew more cautious as they did so, because this place had restrictive spells which had been emplaced by Daolord Allgod. Once those spells were triggered, even Daolords might perish!

"A corpse."

Ning stared at the very center of the treasury region. A stone coffin was located there, and a corpse could be made out inside of it. Above the stone coffin hovered a globe of light.

Thanks to their intelligence reports, both Ning and Dragonbinder knew that the light globes were where the treasures were stored! The ten thousand treasures in the mountains were all different. Some had a single powerful treasure, such as an Eternal weapon, while others had eight or nine different Dao weapons. Some even had extremely formidable techniques, forbidden arts, divine abilities, or special legacies...

In short, everything was possible.

"You try first, senior apprentice-brother Dragonbinder," Ning said.

"Alright, I'll try first." Dragonbinder nodded as he strode forward. When

he reached a distance of three hundred meters from the stone coffin, the globe of light expanded in size to instantly become more than three hundred meters large!

Everything within that region transformed into a blur. Ning could no longer see World God Dragonbinder at all.

“I wonder which treasury this is.” Ning waited quietly to one side. The reason he let World God Dragonbinder make the first attempt was because Dragonbinder was quite powerful! Even if Ning unleashed all of his power, he still would probably be forced to flee in the face of Dragonbinder’s power. Dragonbinder was a true master-class World God, after all, and he had some special treasures of his own. He was definitely a match for the Starlord of Fogstone and arguably even a bit more powerful.

A period of time passed, enough to boil a kettle of tea.

“Whew.” World God Dragonbinder emerged from that region of blurred space. The blurred space quickly shrank in size as the light was retracted back into the globe of light.

“Ugh.” World God Dragonbinder shook his head. “That was ridiculously hard. Way too hard! Even if I spent another chaos cycle training for it, I still wouldn’t have any chance of taking over this treasury.”

“What was the trial?”

Every single treasury had its own trials as set down by Daolord Allgod. You would only gain the contents of the treasury if you succeeded in passing the trial. Everyone had to follow the rules of the game which Daolord Allgod had set down! Perhaps some ancient powers who had become Eternal Emperors might be able to forcibly plunder a few treasures, but those figures generally disdained from acting in such a manner.

In addition, Daolord Allgod’s fame was so great that even many of those Eternal powers were afraid of him.

“It pertained to the mysteries of the Dao of Fire.” World God Dragonbinder explained, “Although I’m quite talented in Fire and in

Water, I'm not even close to being able to solve this trial."

"Fire?" Ning just stared.

Although he had some insights into Fire, he was still quite weak in this regard. He hadn't even mastered the Heavenly Dao of Fire! To pass Daolord Allgod's trial was quite unlikely.

Although Daolord Allgod gave trials to Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals which were easier than the trials he gave to World-level experts, Ning clearly wouldn't be able to succeed in this particular trial. If it was a trial over the Dao of the Sword, Ning would've given it a shot, but Fire?

"I'm very weak in the Dao of Fire." Ning shook his head. "I'll let one of my retainers give it a shot."

"Oh, Youji?" World God Dragonbinder grinned. It had been Flamefairy Su Youji who had informed the others that Ji Ning was heading to the Allgod Estate.

"Yes." Ning nodded, then willed her to emerge. Whoosh. An incomparably beautiful woman dressed in fiery robes appeared by his side. It was Su Youji, the Flamefairy.

"Master." Su Youji revealed a smile, then glanced at World God Dragonbinder. She said in a rather unhappy manner, "Senior Dragonbinder, you accompanied my master to this place but refused to let come out as well."

"That's because we wanted to wait until we could give you something nice, such as right now." World God Dragonbinder grinned at her.

"Something nice?" Su Youji was puzzled.

"Youji." Ning pointed at the distant light globe which hovered above that stone coffin. "We are in one of the treasury regions of the Ten Thousand Mountains of the Allgod Estate."

"A treasury? I heard that Daolord Allgod left behind ten thousand treasures." Su Youji looked at the globe of light, a heated look in her eyes.

She then glanced at Ning. "Master, you let me out because...?"

"Senior apprentice-brother Dragonbinder gave it a shot but failed. The trials of this treasury pertain to the Dao of Fire," Ning explained. "You are quite skilled in the Dao of Fire. You can be considered one of the most elite Elder Gods or Ancestral Immortals in this regard, and you are very close to becoming a World-level expert yourself. You might have a chance at passing this trial."

Su Youji began to grow rather excited.

She had heard others speak of this place before...

Every single trial in the Allgod Estate was incredibly difficult for World-level experts, but they were generally a bit easier for Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals. However, the trials were all different in nature. A Trial of Fire would test everyone in the Dao of Fire, whereas a Trial of Lightning would test everyone in the Dao of Lightning.

"Should I give it a try?" Su Youji looked at Ning.

"Go." Ning nodded.

Su Youji eagerly and nervously walked forward towards the stone coffin. Once she reached three hundred meters of it, the globe of light once more expanded to completely encompass her within it.

"Ji Ning, do you think Youji will be able to acquire the treasures?" World God Dragonbinder asked.

"She should have at least a 20% to 30% chance," Ning posited. After Daolord Solesky had given Su Youji some guidance, she had improved quite dramatically. She was just a hair away from becoming a World-level expert and could break through at any moment. Given how talented she was in the Dao of Fire, it was likely that she stood a very good chance.

Time continued to pass, one minute at a time.

"She's been inside for longer than me," World God Dragonbinder said expectantly.

"Yes." Ning nodded. He was rather excited as well. It would be wonderful

if the treasury's contents ended up in one of their hands. If the treasures Su Youji acquired were of limited use to her but of tremendous use to World God Dragonbinder, she could trade them to him.

Whoosh. The Flamefairy suddenly emerged from that blurry region. The field of light quickly retracted and returned to the globe.

"I failed." Su Youji looked at Ning, a hint of disappointment and helplessness in her eyes. "I was so close! Just a bit more and I would've succeeded. If I had just slightly deeper insights into the Dao of Fire, I would've succeeded. Unfortunately, when that happens I'll probably reach the World level."

"The Daolord's trials must include a different component as well," World God Dragonbinder said.

"Mm. Perhaps. Based on the records I read, less than one in ten thousand cultivators will succeed in passing one of these trials. Most likely, you have to have certain special insights into the Dao of Fire in order to succeed." Su Youji nodded.

Ning nodded as well. "Now you two have gotten me interested. I want to give it a shot as well."

"You, Master? But your Dao of Fire...?" Su Youji looked at Ning. She had followed Ning for some time now and knew him to be very weak in the Dao of Fire.

"I can at least give it a try, right?" Ning also knew that he was quite weak in the Dao of Fire, but he had never tried one of these trials before. He wanted to at least experience it for himself. It was quite safe; no one had ever lost their lives in the treasuries before.

Whoosh.

Ning stepped into the range of the stone coffin as well. That globe of light emitted a large wave of light and quickly encompassed a region of three hundred meters with it.

# Chapter 23: The Treasury's Trial

Ji Ning was transported into the blurry region of light.

“Eh?” Ning stared in surprise. In front of him were a series of walls of light that protected the light globe above the coffin. There were nine walls of light in total, and each of them were covered with flowing, fiery-red runes.

“Pass through all nine restrictive spells and you shall acquire the treasure.” A booming voice rang out by Ning’s ears.

Ning was puzzled.

Where did that voice come from? Was it the voice of Daolord Allgod, or was it the voice of a treasure spirit?

“Who cares.” It didn’t really matter. All Ning needed to know was that he had to be on his best behavior in a place which had been established by a Daolord of such incredible power.

“Pass through all nine restrictive spells? How?”

Ning stared at the first light barrier and the fiery red runes flowing atop it.

“Doesn’t seem that hard.” Ning quickly came to understand how the barrier worked. He pressed his palm onto the light barrier, filling it with his Immortal energy. Because Ning had already comprehended its mysteries, he was easily able to master it and take control over it.

“Disperse.” Ning willed the light barrier to disperse. Whoosh. The first light barrier completely vanished, leaving eight more behind.

Ning once more advanced forward. The second barrier was also one covered by divine runes pertaining to the Dao of Fire, but they were clearly much more complicated. Ning just stood there, blinking several times as he stared at those runes.

“I had no idea the difference between me and Su Youji was this huge,” Ning mumbled to himself. He was both an Elder God and an Ancestral

Immortal, and so he was given the exact same trial as the one Su Youji had been given. She had said that she was ‘very close’ to succeeding, which meant that she had probably made it to the final light barrier and was very close to solving it.”

“I...can’t even understand the runes on this eighth barrier.” Ning shook his head. “I really am weak in the Dao of Fire.”

Despite this setback, Ning wasn’t too disappointed.

Cultivation was a path filled with choices! If you chose to focus your efforts in areas you were skilled in, you would be able to advance much more quickly and even find it easier to break through certain bottlenecks. Ning was best suited to the Dao of the Sword. Even Lu Dongbin and Patriarch Subhuti had seen this in him all those years ago. Although Ning had made fairly quick breakthroughs in heartforce as well, heartforce remained a matter of the heart. Even after experiencing the great war that had shaken the Three Realms, Ning’s heartforce was merely at the fourth stage. His Dao of the Sword, however, had advanced quite rapidly. He was now just one step away from sixth-stage swordforce, the ‘Sword World’ level. He had even invented a first stance for his [Quintessence Sword-Intent], the ‘Blackmist’ stance, and this stance was nearly as powerful as the third stance of the [Nameless] sword-art, the ‘Great Firmament’ stance.

The power of this technique was so great that it was superior to some weaker Sword Worlds!

All Sword Immortals trained in the Dao of the Sword, but no two Sword Worlds were the same. Some were dominating, others were insidious. Even two cultivators who trained in the exact same technique would end up with their own different insights into it. As for the ‘Great Firmament’ stance, it would result in one of the most powerful types of Sword World.

“The Dao of the Sword is my true Dao. Fire?” Ning shook his head and laughed.

“Uh...” Ning’s face suddenly went blank.

“That voice said that I had to ‘pass through all nine restrictive spells’.”

Ning glanced at the eight light barriers remaining. “It just said ‘pass through’. It didn’t say how I had to pass through.”

“When I bind and take control over the restrictive spells, I can disperse them and pass through them.” A strange light flickered in Ning’s eyes. “But...if I forcibly break through them, I would also be able to pass through.”

There were two ways of dealing with any formation.

The first method was to understand the formation and then break it down on a technical level. This was what Ning had done with the initial light barrier, and it was the most common solution.

The second method was just to overpower it with raw force!

It didn’t matter how profound a formation was if an enemy could rip it apart using raw, overwhelming power!

“Would I be able to breach a formation left behind by Daolord Allgod?” Ning mused to himself.

He pondered for a moment, then he bowed respectfully and called out, “Revered Daolord, this junior is not capable of passing through these nine barriers through mastering and dispersing them. However, this junior would like to be so bold as to attempt breaking through using raw power.”

After speaking, Ning turned his gaze towards the eight light barriers.

“Break!” Ning thrust out his palm, forming a streak of light at the tip of his fingers. The streak of light had the vague form of a sword, and it was filled with Ning’s azureflower mist energy. Ning even activated the Seventh Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand] in his two hands, making his fingers comparable to Dao weapons.

Boom!

As Ning struck out, the second barrier of light trembled then shattered apart.

“It broke?” Ning was overjoyed. However, he wasn’t in a hurry to press the attack, instead pausing for a brief moment to see if there were any

repercussions.

Nothing happened.

"It seems as though using raw power to break through the formation isn't considered a violation of the Daolord's decree."

"Let me continue." Ning took another step forward, his right hand quickly executing the savage 'Blood Drop' stance as he sent it stabbing towards a light barrier. Whoosh! It struck out like a sharp sword, stabbing into the light barrier. The light barrier trembled twice, then shattered apart.

Ning laughed.

His power was nothing to joke about. With the azureflower mist energy reinforcing him, he was every bit as strong as a World God! The power of this blow was as strong as a blow from an actual World God...but of course, this was merely the seventh barrier.

"I still wonder where this 'azureflower region' formed by the merging of the Nine Chaos Seals came from." Ning felt increasingly amazed by how unearthly powerful this technique was. Without it, he would at most have the body of a half-step World God. Even with Violetjewel, he would be just barely comparable to a normal World God at best. He wouldn't even be a match for an elite World God! Now that the azureflower mist energy was reinforcing his body, he was definitely as physically strong as a World God. With Violetjewel in hand, he was able to give master-class World Gods a run for their money.

"I wonder how powerful I will be when I become a World God." Ning fantasized about it for a moment, then returned to the matter at hand.

"Time to continue." Ning once more struck out, attacking the sixth barrier. However, this one was clearly much harder to penetrate. Ning wasn't able to breach it with his first strike and needed to hack at it multiple times before succeeding.

"I'll use my sword, I guess." Ning waved his hand, producing Violetjewel.

"Break!" He stabbed out with his sword, activating a hint of its

quintessence core as he did so.

Hiss!

The sword easily stabbed straight into that barrier of light.

“Again!”

“And again!”

Ning stepped forward one step at a time. With Violetjewel in hand, his strikes were now much more powerful. This was a formation meant to test Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals. Ning naturally found it quite easy to penetrate. Even without using the Blackmist stance, he was still able to breach the seven of the nine barriers.

“The eighth barrier?” Ning once more stabbed out with his sword. This time, however, he failed.

“Hmph.” Ning solemnly held Violetjewel in his hands...then suddenly lashed out, transforming it into a bloody shadow of sword-light. Violetjewel left a streak of terrifying, bloody red light in its wake as it pierced forward. This was the power of its quintessence core! Violetjewel itself was covered in bloody light that radiated an aura of astonishing might.

Whoosh!

The bloody sword-light stabbed straight through the eighth barrier, causing it to crumble.

“Just one left.” Ning didn’t hesitate at all, once more striking out with his ultimate attack. The azureflower mist energy made Ning’s sword far faster than the limits of the Heavenly Daos, while the quintessence core of the sword made this Eternal weapon irresistibly sharp! It was very sharp, very powerful, and incomparably fast. This blow would’ve been able to easily shatter a chaosworld apart. Even if the Solar Star or the Lunar Star were in front of Ning, they would have been pierced through by this blow.

Boom!

When the tip of the sword slammed against the ninth barrier, the barrier

began to tremble violently. Ripples shuddered over its surface as though a rock had fallen into a pool of water...and yet, it did not break.

"I'm still a bit too weak?" Ning was stunned.

His blows were now incredibly powerful thanks to his own great strength and the fact that he had an Eternal weapon.

"I told you to break!" Ning once more struck out with his most powerful killing blow. Although the ninth barrier shuddered violently, it was clear that Ning's blows were just a bit too weak to break it.

"Eh?!" Ning frowned. This was already the most powerful sword-strike he was capable of mustering.

"I guess I'll have to find a way to strengthen the power of that blow." Ning immediately stepped back, moving to stand just within the three hundred meter radius of the blurry light region.

Whoosh. A pair of azure wings appeared behind Ning's back, crackling with electric light. These were the 'Thunderlight Wings' which Ning had purchased during the treasure auction. The wings used lightning as their energy source and sword-light to tear through all obstructions, allowing the user to move at incredible speeds.

"Attack!"

The wings trembled, instantly sending Ning hurtling through the torn layers of space and allowing him to move at tremendous speed as he moved towards the ninth light barrier like a streak of light himself.

Cultivators needed a bit of distance to build up speed as well. Long-distance flying speed and short-distance dodging speed were two completely different things. It was extremely difficult for one to instantly unleash all of his power and speed! Three hundred meters simply wasn't enough. Ning had to use the Thunderlight Wings to build up enough speed to surpass the limits of the Heavenly Daos. Without it, Ning would perhaps only be able to move at 60% of his normal speed.

"Break!" As Ning charged out, he once more struck forward with his Eternal weapon!

A sword's attack speed was extremely important.

Even a pebble that moved at the speed of light could cause tremendous damage. By the same principle, a sword that moved 30% faster than it previously did could easily cause more than double the amount of damage! If Ning just struck out from point-blank distance, there was no way for him to increase the speed of his sword. Thus, he was forced to resort to the most primitive of options...fly forward at high speed and borrow from his own speed to deliver a full-force blow. This instantly allowed his sword to move 20% or 30% faster than before.

BOOM!!! Ning's terrifyingly sharp Eternal weapon struck out like a bloody blur. Although it paused momentarily, in the end it still pierced straight through the light barrier.

BANG!!!! The final light barrier disintegrated.

The light globe above the stone coffin was now within arm's reach!

# Chapter 24: Formation Spirit

Ji Ning looked at the globe of light hovering above the coffin. He couldn't help but feel slightly excited; this was a treasury left behind by Daolord Allgod, after all! He really was quite lucky to have encountered a treasury so soon after entering the Allgod Estate.

Whoosh. Ning reached out with his hand, touching the light globe with his fingers.

"Eh?" Ning's face changed. He sent his fingers through the light globe two more times, completely confused. "Nothing? There's nothing inside?"

When his fingers touched the light globe, they went straight through the globe as though the globe didn't even exist. There really was nothing inside.

Rumble...

Suddenly, a beam of light descended out of nowhere, materializing next to the stone coffin into the shape a white-robed old man.

Although Ning was quite surprised, he was able to keep calm. This was because he knew exactly how powerful the restrictive spells Daolord Allgod had left behind. It was capable of easily slaying most Daolords; if the formation wanted him dead, he had no chance of fighting back at all! However, countless cultivators throughout countless chaos cycles had ventured through these treasures. There was no danger here whatsoever! No one had ever lost their lives while trying to gain a treasure from within a treasury.

"An Elder God?" The white-robed elder glanced at Ning. The old man emanated an aura of natural majesty and prestige, but he chuckled softly as he looked at Ning. "Can you tell me your name?"

"Darknorth." Ning looked at the elder. "Who are you, senior?"

"The formation-spirit of the Ten Thousand Mountains. My master once gave me a name, 'Myriad Mountains'," the old man said.

"Formation-spirit?" Ning was surprised.

It was quite normal for treasures to give birth to treasure-spirits. However, it was incredibly rare for powerful formations to gain sentience as well. For example, the ancient spacetime transfer arrays that were spread throughout the various territories of the primordial chaos had existed for countless chaos cycles, but Ning had never heard of any of them gaining sentience. Similarly, although some incredibly powerful formations would appear during various treasure auctions, Ning had never heard of any of them possessing sentience.

“Is it really that surprising? Master lay down three formations in total: the Ten Thousand Mountains Formation, the Fog Sea Formation, and the Castrum DivinitusFormation. He infused all three with his most profound insights into formations, and all three of us gained sentience.” The old man looked at Ning. “Someone on your level cannot possibly even imagine how truly powerful Master was. You might’ve met some Samsara Daolords in the past, but don’t even try to judge Master by their yardstick. They aren’t worthy! Only a Samsara Daolord who has pursued an Eternal Emperor after sending them fleeing can be discussed in the same breath as my master.”

Although countless years had passed, the spirit of this formation was still filled with the utmost of pride in his master.

“Understood.” Ning nodded.

If you boasted while having nothing to back it up, others would mock you. However, Daolord Allgod was so powerful that even Daolord Solesky was in awe of him and admitted inferiority before his prowess. Even Daolord Badlands would sigh in awe when discussing Daolord Allgod with his subordinates and juniors. Clearly, Daolord Allgod had been so awe-inspiring a figure in life that even now, after having died countless ages ago, his fame continued to resonate with later generations of cultivators.

“There’s no need for me to wax on any longer regarding how almighty Master was. Once you become a Daolord, you’ll understand,” the white-robed elder said.

“Me? A Daolord?” Ning laughed. “Why do you have such confidence in

me, senior?"

"You clearly are just an Elder God, but you are capable of unleashing the power of a master-class World God." The formation-spirit sighed. "It would be very easy for you to kill weak World Gods. An Elder God capable of easily killing most World Gods! There are very, very few monsters such as you. Many people will have a chance to encounter a Samsara Daolord in their lifetimes, but meeting a monster like you is incredibly rare."

"Monsters like you generally are blessed with tremendous luck. Based on what I know, roughly 80% of people like you end up becoming Samsara Daolords," the formation-spirit said.

"Oh? Eighty percent?" Ning nodded slowly.

In the Three Realms, there was a belief in 'karmic luck'. Luck was an ephemeral, fleeting thing. No cultivator had 'fixed' luck, as luck could often change. For example, you might be born into an incredibly good family with your parents both being powerful Immortals or Fiendgods. Someone born into a situation like this could be said to be born into a tremendously lucky situation. However, if this person ended up becoming a silkpants wastrel who didn't work hard in cultivation, his karmic luck would begin to decline.

Ji Ning, for example. He was reincarnated into a decent family and with the Nuwa Painting, and so it could be said that he was born with fairly decent luck. After he gained the legacy of Daoist Threelives, his karmic luck became even better.

Every single person had to fight for their own karmic luck.

However, the karmic luck of the Three Realms was quite weak compared to the overwhelming power of the primordial chaos. Ning was now fighting to gain the karmic luck of the Endless Territories! There were some World-level cultivators who would massacre the living creatures of many chaosworlds, causing great sin to accrue upon them. Daolord Allgod had once chased after and slaughtered countless great sinners, resulting in more and more karmic luck and karmic blessings being bestowed upon him. Karmic virtue and karmic sin existed in the Endless Territories...and

so too did karmic luck!

In the Three Realms, three people gained the Nine Chaos Seals – Nuwa, Ji Ning, and Daoist Three Purities. All of them gained tremendous karmic luck as a result. If it wasn't for the Nine Chaos Seals, Ning wouldn't be able to easily slay weak World Gods as a mere Elder God!

"However, on the path of cultivation, either you advance forward or you slowly fall behind." The formation-spirit looked at Ning. "My master was even more monstrously talented than you are. Alas, he still failed in his Daomerge. He died and his Dao faded away. Remember to treasure every single scrap of karmic luck you come across."

"Thank you for your words of wisdom." Ning nodded.

"Actually, all of the treasures here in the Ten Thousand Mountains are empty." The elderly formation-spirit looked at Ning. "I decide what treasures are to be awarded to those who pass the trials. Master left me with many treasures and decreed that I can teleport any of them into the globe of light. He certainly didn't want to be bothered with such minor matters."

Ning finally understood.

"In this treasury, I had originally intended the light globe to be filled with an idol of fire that was filled with the mysteries of the Dao of Fire." As the elderly formation-spirit spoke, he waved his hand and produced a palm-sized fiery idol. This idol had eight faces, some beautiful, some ugly, some stern. The idol was covered with countless mysterious runes.

"However..."

"Every single Elder God who wishes to try and break the treasury formations here in the Ten Thousand Islands has to have at least the power of a master-class World God. If they do, then they can succeed." The elderly formation-spirit looked at Ning. "Every single monstrously talented figure such as yourself is qualified to receive a treasure...but of course, you have to find a treasury first."

Ning nodded.

“However, each person will only have one such opportunity.”

“On your very first trip here, you defeated a barrier spell through raw power. As a result, the seeds of good karma have been sown between us! However, you’ll find that you will no longer be able to break through any of the other barrier spells using raw power,” the elderly formation-spirit said.

“Understood.” Ning said in surprise, “But senior, you spoke of ‘sowing the seeds of good karma’. Although I feel confident in my powers, you are the formation-spirit of the Ten Thousand Mountains. Can it be that there is something you wish Darknorth to do, senior?”

The elderly formation-spirit said, “There is indeed one thing. However, I won’t force you to do it; I merely hope that you can help.”

“Please let me know what you wish me to do, senior.” Ning was puzzled.

“My master had a hated foe.” A savage light flickered through the elderly formation-spirit’s eyes, and a murderous aura permeated his voice. “Master pursued his foe for many years, spending enormous amounts of effort in his attempt to kill him. Alas, in the end he wasn’t able to do so. His foe ended up fleeing.”

Ning was stunned. “Senior, are you speaking of that Eternal Emperor he pursued?”

“Yes. The Eternal Emperor.” The formation-spirit explained, “His name was Emperor Melobo.”

“Emperor Melobo?” Ning tasted the name. The name felt foreign, alien.

“According to what Badlands told me, Emperor Melobo has already returned.” The elderly formation-spirit laughed coldly. “My master chased him all the way into the endless darkness, where he hid himself from my master’s sight. He must have returned only after learning that my master died.”

Although Ning was surprised that Daolord Badlands was apparently acquainted with the formation-spirit, he couldn’t help but instead first ask, “Senior, are you asking me to deal with this Eternal Emperor in the

future?"

"I am." The elderly formation-spirit nodded.

Ning was speechless. "Senior, you think too highly of me."

Eternal Emperors were eternal figures who had succeeded in their Daomerge! Daolord Allgod had died countless years ago but Emperor Melobo was still alive and well.

Daolord Allgod had chased after Emperor Melobo for countless years but had been unable to slay him. In other words, there wasn't an enormous difference in power between the two. Given how much time had passed, Emperor Melobo had to have grown more powerful.

"Haha, I'm just planting seeds to sprout in the future. I don't expect all of them to blossom." The elderly formation-spirit explained, "In addition, Emperor Melobo is an enemy of the entire Dao Alliance! You came here with World God Dragonbinder of the Badlands Court. Given that he trusts you, I imagine you should be a member of the Dao Alliance as well. There's no way a monstrously talented genius like you would betray them for our enemies."

"What is a 'Dao Alliance'?" Ning was rather dazed now.

"An alliance which encompasses virtually all of the cultivators of the Endless Territories." The elderly formation-spirit looked at Ning. "Daolord Badlands is a member as well, and long ago the seeds of good karma were sown between the two of us as well. Haha...of the many seeds that I have sown, his has been the most illustrious one to date. I know all the disciples of the Badlands Court. Given that you came alongside World God Dragonbinder, you should also be a member of the Dao Alliance. Are you a member of the Badlands Court or...?"

"Vastheaven Palace," Ning said.

Daolord Solesky was on very good terms with Daolord Badlands, and they were willing to meet each other in public. This meant they were probably on the same side.

However, this 'Dao Alliance' sounded quite powerful. An alliance

comprising almost all the cultivators of the Endless Territories? What an extravagant claim.

“Ah.” The elderly formation-spirit nodded. “I’ve heard Badlands speak of Vastheaven Palace before. Yes, it is indeed part of the Dao Alliance as well. I’m not surprised you haven’t heard of the Dao Alliance, as you are still too young and weak. Even amongst World Gods, 99% of them will have never heard of the Dao Alliance! Only the truly illustrious World-level experts will be accepted into the Dao Alliance, as the alliance is primarily composed of Samsara Daolords. I expect World God Dragonbinder has perhaps heard of the Dao Alliance.”

“The mysteries of the Endless Territories are not for someone like you to comprehend. However, there are some dangers that are aimed at all cultivators...and Emperor Melobo is one of them.” The elderly formation-spirit looked at Ning.

“But enough of that. Once you become a World-level expert, your clan or sect will inform you of some of our mysteries. In addition, my information is a bit outdated.” The elderly formation-spirit nodded. “Well, then. What treasure do you want?”

# Chapter 25: The Nine Secret Arts, Secret Art of Thunder

"You've passed the trial. You deserve a treasure." The elderly formation-spirit looked at Ji Ning. "I have many treasures. Which treasure do you desire the most? If I have it, I'll give it to you."

Ning had been still musing about this 'Dao Alliance'. Upon hearing the formation-spirit's question, he turned his attention to the treasury. Hesitating slightly, he asked, "Do you have any scrolls of the Mirrorsnow Painting?"

"I do not." The elderly formation-spirit shook his head. Daolord Allgod had left behind many treasures, but the Mirrorsnow Painting was not one of them.

"Oh..." Ning continued to ponder.

What treasure? What treasure did he need? The opportunity to choose a treasure was a priceless one. Many thoughts flitted through Ning's mind. After having experienced a treasure auction, Ning now knew of many more treasures than he had in the past.

"I guess I was wrong to make that suggestion. You don't even know what treasures I have. How about this...what are you skilled in?" The formation-spirit chuckled. "Aside from the Dao of the Sword."

"I'm most skilled in the Dao of the Sword. Aside from that, I'm also skilled in lightning and in water," Ning said.

"Master's title was 'Allgod'," the elderly formation-spirit explained, "Precisely because he was skilled in almost everything! Alchemy, formations...he was a master of many Daos. Unfortunately, he truly wasn't that skilled in the Dao of the Sword. He was, however, extremely skilled in the Dao of Lightning! However, you'll be fighting against enemies well above your level. Lightning-attribute techniques won't be that useful to you."

His old face wrinkled as he frowned. Clearly, he was pondering this

question.

"I have it!" The formation-spirit looked at Ning, then reached out with his hand and generated a spatial ripple from his palm. Moments later, a jade slip appeared.

"This jade slip now belongs to you." The formation-spirit passed it over to Ning, sending it floating through the air.

"Also, the treasure that was originally assigned to this treasury..." The elderly formation-spirit tossed out a second item, a fiery idol. "This is yours as well. My master once slew a vile Daolord who trained in the Dao of Fire and took this idol from him. If you were to sell it, you'd be able to sell it for one or two thousand cubes of chaos nectar. As for the jade slip, it contains a secret art which Master personally developed. Its value is incalculable. Not even the combined value of four or five Eternal weapons would be a match for it."

Ning was shocked.

For the idol to be worth one or two thousand cubes made sense. The jade slip, however, was truly amazing.

Ning accepted the idol, then turned to look at the jade slip. The jade slip was a inky jade color, and one could see faint characters carved into the inky jade. Ning sent his coresense into it, quickly discovering that it contained a lifeblood oath.

"I swear on my very life itself that prior to becoming a Samsara Daolord, I am not to share this [Novessence Thunder] secret art with anyone else." The lifeblood oath was quite simply worded.

Almost all techniques required lifeblood oaths to be sworn, be it treasures acquired from a treasure auction or from one's sect.

Rumble...

As soon as Ning swore the oath, an enormous amount of information poured into his mind. Daolord Allgod had left behind an utterly amazing lightning-attribute secret art in this jade slip, and all of it was put on display for Ning.

This secret art was known as the [Novessence Thunder].

Daolord Allgod was an ancient power who was extremely skilled in alchemy, formations, artificing, and many other arts. At his level, only divine abilities and secret arts that he personally developed would be a good fit for him. Thus, he poured some of his insights into alchemy and artificing into developing secret arts that were meant to give himself greater power.

The more power, the better!

Daolord Allgod had created a total of nine mighty secret arts. These secret arts could be used at long range, allowing him to effortlessly dominate other experts on his level. In fact, he could even use them to tangle with Eternal Emperors!

As for the [Novessence Thunder], it was one of those nine mighty secret arts!

“A secret art like this can actually exist?!” Ning was boggled as he read through the information. “A secret art like this can exist?!”

This technique completely destroyed Ning’s preconceptions regarding secret arts.

Most techniques or secret arts required the wielder to have certain insights into the Dao, allowing him to use certain special technical tricks. The forbidden arts used by God Emperor Blacklotus fell into this category.

Ning’s [Nameless] sword-art was a good example. It had multiple levels, and only when one gained a high level of insight into the Dao of the Sword could one use the increasingly profound levels of the [Nameless] sword-art.

However, the [Novessence Thunder] was completely different.

It was like alchemy. When forging pills, one would gather all sorts of rare and precious ingredients, mix them together, use fire and energy to smelt them, then form them into a marvelous pill.

The [Novessence Thunder] required the wielder to harvest nine types of

divine lightning, mix them together in a complicated way that was akin to alchemy, then transform them into a perfect thunder-attribute secret art.

As for the mixing process, Ning was rendered completely speechless upon reading it.

It was simply perfect. It was like a work of absolute art.

"In his hands, thunder and lightning were playthings that he could mold as he pleased. He was able to effortless mix various types of lightning together, joining them into an incredibly powerful secret art of thunder."

Ning was truly stunned. He had once bound a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent, and so he knew very well that lightning was intrinsically a type of force that was extremely wild and savage. Just binding and refining lightning was extremely difficult, to say nothing of using quasi-alchemical methods to mix multiple types of lightning together to form a secret art. This was truly unimaginable.

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There were two sections to the [Novessence Thunder].

The first section required the user to harvest nine specific types of chaos lightning. These nine types of chaos lightning, by themselves, weren't even capable of killing an ordinary World God. However, once you perfectly mixed these nine types of ordinary chaos lightning together in a certain manner through this secret art, you would be able to slay master-class World Gods and suppress even supreme World Gods!

The power of this secret art completely surpassed any Eternal weapon.

The second section involved harvesting nine specific types of Dao lightning. These types of Dao lightning had to be naturally harvested and not artificially manufactured, and they were incredibly rare. When Daolord Allgod created this technique, he had been at the Verge. He had many types of divine Dao lightning to choose from, but in the end he was only able to find these nine types which were suitable. After binding and smelting them together, he instantly rose to stand at the very peak of power amongst Daolords!

However...

It was extremely difficult for a person to succeed in mastering this technique!

"This truly is an inconceivable secret art." Ning couldn't help but praise the technique. "I've never seen anything like it. So lightning can be manipulated in a way such as this?"

"For the sake of killing Emperor Melobo, Master poured all of his energy into coming up with those nine mighty secret arts. Every single one of them was so powerful as to allow any wielder to gaze down upon the other heroes of the realm. Generally speaking, even Samsara Daolords at the Verge would find it difficult to withstand these techniques. When the nine secret arts are used together, they are capable of killing almost any Samsara Daolord." The formation-spirit was quite proud. "Although the nine secret arts weren't able to slay Emperor Melobo, all nine of them were able to form domain-type effects that were able to completely suppress him. As a result, Emperor Melobo's power in battle was weakened to roughly a half of his maximum power."

Ning nodded.

Having fully reviewed this technique, he knew quite well that once one completely mastered the first section of the [Novessence Thunder], one would be able to unleash an awe-inspiring domain of endless lightning bolts that stretched out more than a million kilometers. This was a lightning domain! It could suppress even supreme World-level experts. Even if Ning ended up encountering an extremely powerful figure which the lightning domain couldn't kill, it would still dramatically weaken them and ensure they would only be able to unleash half of their full power.

"Nine secret arts..." Ning couldn't help but sigh in amazement.

"Unfortunately, Emperor Melobo still managed to escape in the end. He was simply too skilled in fleeing techniques." The formation-spirit sighed. "Before Master died, he left all nine of his secret arts with the Dao Alliance. If you render great services unto the Dao Alliance or are able to sell them enough treasures, you'll be able to learn all nine techniques

from them. However, these secrets are far more valuable than even the ‘Pseudo Samsara pills’ which so many World-level experts lust over! Even most Samsara Daolords would love to have a chance to learn any one of these nine secret arts.”

Ning nodded.

Secret arts were incredibly powerful, but Ning also understood that mastering them could be incredibly difficult!

In this case, harvesting the nine types of lightning was just one of many difficult tasks. What really mattered was the process of perfectly alchemizing them together into a perfect blend. Actually succeeding in this required the user to be very, very skilled in multiple areas. Daolord Allgod was an ancient power who was skilled in alchemy, formations, and more, which was why he was able to accomplish it. However, when Ning viewed the technique he had two responses. First, he felt that the technique was so beautiful it was like a perfect work of art. Then, he felt a cold chill run down his spine. Training in this technique would be incredibly hard.

“Thank goodness I have a powerful divine body. My divine power is far more robust than others at my level, as is my soul. I should still be able to succeed in this secret art,” Ning mused to himself.

“I’ve given you the secret art. I hope that, in the future, you’ll at least be able to reach Daolord Badlands’ level,” the formation-spirit said. “Alright. Now that you’ve taken the treasure from this treasury, hurry up and leave this place alongside your companions. This treasure region is about to fall apart.”

Whoosh. After speaking, the formation-spirit’s body dispersed into particles of light, then vanished. The light globe above the stone coffin also vanished, as did the region of light around the coffin.

World God Dragonbinder and Flamefairy Su Youji stared towards Ning from their original positions.

“Master.”

“Brother Ji Ning.”

The two called out to him at the same time.

Rumble...

The treasure region began to shake as one of the walls split apart, revealing a new passageway.

“This treasure region is about to crumble. We need to hurry up and leave.” Ning didn’t have a chance to explain what had just happened.

“Let’s go.” World God Dragonbinder and Su Youji both understood that time was of the essence. The three immediately moved at high speed towards that distant passageway.

Rumble...

The enormous treasury region began to completely fall apart. Boulders slammed down from the ceiling, completely burying the passageway behind them as the treasury sank down into the ground.

# Chapter 26: Level Retainer

Ji Ning, Su Youji, and World God Dragonbinder travelled through the new passageway and reached another part of the mountain. They all turned to glance at the collapsed treasury.

"Brother Ji Ning, congratulations! You acquired the treasures," World God Dragonbinder said.

"You are formidable as always, Master." Su Youji was filled with admiration for Ning.

"Brother Ji Ning, I don't quite understand...both the Flamefairy and I attempted the trial but neither of us could retrieve the treasures. But you, brother Ji Ning..." World God Dragonbinder couldn't help but ask this question. He knew that Ji Ning was most skilled with the sword. If the trial was a trial of the Dao of the Sword, fine. But this clearly was a trial of the Dao of Fire!

Even the Flamefairy, who was just a hair away from becoming a Chaos Immortal, was unable to pass this trial. How could Ji Ning have succeeded?

"There are certain secrets and tricks to overcoming the treasury trials which Daolord Allgod laid down." This was the only thing Ning said in response.

World God Dragonbinder and Su Youji both understood. The answer most likely involved some of Ji Ning's personal secrets, and so they no longer asked. Cultivators sometimes would be placed under lifeblood oaths or simply be unwilling to disclose their most powerful, life-saving techniques. Thus, in general if someone didn't wish to discuss something, others wouldn't force the topic.

"I did acquire a treasure from within this treasury." Ning waved his hand, producing a palm-sized fiery idol.

"What is this?" World God Dragonbinder's gaze turned dreamy for a moment as his attention became absorbed by this idol.

As for the Flamefairy, her response was even more exaggerated. As she stared at the fiery idol, she was completely captivated by it.

As a master-class World God, Dragonbinder was quickly able to shake off the effect and come to his senses. He looked at Ning in an admiring manner. “Brother Ji Ning, I’m surprised that you are willing to show this treasure to the two of us in such a casual fashion. This idol hides within it a fire-attribute technique of tremendous profundity. The idol itself has eight faces, with each face representing one of eight great mysteries. This is something far more valuable than a mere technique-holding jade slip. Jade slips merely contain information on a technique; if you want to understand the technique, you have to slowly meditate on it. This fiery idol, however, has eight different auras and intents that can actually guide the cultivator in the correct method to train in this technique.”

“I’ve already become a master-class World God. What I now need to do is find my own path and then follow it to become a Samsara Daolord! These techniques are useless to me, but they are of tremendous use to the Flamefairy.” World God Dragonbinder explained, “This idol has to be worth over a thousand cubes of chaos nectar. Generally speaking, a person would have to pay a hundred cubes to even be given the chance to merely ‘borrow’ this idol to look at it for a while. You truly are generous to this retainer of yours.”

“It is useless to me but useful to her. I’m naturally going to give it to her. She’s my retainer! If she becomes more powerful, that means my team will be more powerful,” Ning said with a laugh.

“Ahaha...” World God Dragonbinder nodded.

Different cultivators treated their retainers in different manners. Some cultivators who were on the same general level of power as their retainers would treat them as friends and equals. However, if there was an enormous disparity in power the retainers would often be treated like slaves! When Daolord Windsource died, he even took quite a few of his disciples with him, to say nothing of his retainers.

During his time in the Badlands Court, Ning had sparred with quite a

few people. His sword-arts were so profound that no Elder God or Ancestral Immortal in the Badlands Court was a match for him. From this alone, World God Dragonbinder could tell that Ji Ning was definitely comparable to a World God in power! He had to be much more powerful than Su Youji. For him to be courteous to her was one thing, but for him to give her such a valuable legacy in such a straightforward manner was something else. This sort of behavior was fairly rare.

“Eh?” Ning turned to look at Su Youji. A look flickered through World God Dragonbinder’s eyes as he turned to look at her as well.

Su Youji had already shut her eyes and vague ripples of fire had begun to swirl around her.

“Sudden enlightenment?” World God Dragonbinder said softly.

“Yes.” Ning nodded. They were inside the Allgod Estate, a very dangerous place. Generally speaking, no one would engage in meditation here. If Su Youji was here by herself and a prajna-state of sudden enlightenment descended upon her, she would probably break it right away. She would first leave the ruins, find a safe place to stay, then re-engage in her meditations. However, in doing so she would’ve lost the benefit from this prajna-state of sudden enlightenment. Thankfully, she was alongside Ji Ning and World God Dragonbinder. She trusted that the two would protect her, and so she allowed herself to be drawn into the prajna-state.

“Come here.” Ning waved his hand, causing Su Youji to be drawn into his estate-treasure and be placed atop an island.

Ning exerted his will, causing that island to be completely separated from the rest of the estate-world. As the master of this estate-world, Ning was able to ensure that there was absolutely no way that Su Youji’s moment of enlightenment would be disturbed.

“It seems likely that the Flamefairy is going to break through to become a Chaos Immortal.” World God Dragonbinder let out an impressed sigh.

“Yes.” Ning nodded. “Youji was always quite talented. In the past, however, she never had any good teachers. Although my big brother Daolord Solesky gave her a few tips, he did so in a rather casual manner.

This idol, however, has a truly systemized and complete technique within it.”

“Yes. This idol can guide someone to become a master-class World-level figure. Haha, Ji Ning...it seems you are about to acquire a World-level retainer.” World God Dragonbinder laughed.

“I can feel the pressure already.” Ning laughed as well.

“Hurry up and make your own breakthrough as well. Your sword-arts are as impressive as the sword-arts of quite a number of World-level Sword Immortals that I know,” World God Dragonbinder said.

“Mm.” Ning himself could sense that he had reached a bottleneck in the ‘Great Firmament’ stance. However, he was fairly close to making his breakthrough. The [Nameless] sword-art was an extremely profound sword-art; upon mastering this next level, he would form a Sword World that was far stronger than that of most Sword Immortals! As for Ning’s own ‘Blackmist’ stance, it was a stance that was fairly close in power to the ‘Great Firmament’ stance.

“Although I’m just a hair’s breadth away, that tiny bit of distance has prevented countless Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals from taking the next step.” Ning let out a sigh.

“True.” World God Dragonbinder couldn’t help but think about himself and the many other cultivators who were trapped as master-class World-level experts and were unable to make a breakthrough. “A single step that can be as wide as a moat that separates the heavens and the earth.”

That final step was the hardest step to take.

There were many, many master-class World-level experts. Even the Starlord of Fogstone, who had only trained for a fairly short period of time, had become a master-class World God. So had God Emperor Blackstone! But how few of them would become into Samsara Daolords?

“Let’s go view some other places,” Ning said.

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Ning and World God Dragonbinder were fairly strong, and the Ten Thousand Mountains were merely the outermost layer of the Allgod Estate. There were actually very few World-level experts here; most cultivators present were Elder Gods or Ancestral Immortals. Thus, the two were essentially able to roam through this region as they pleased. No one dared to antagonize the two of them.

In the blink of an eye, more than two years had gone by.

Given how powerful Ning and Dragonbinder were, the ‘outer region’ truly was of no challenge to them. This was especially true for World God Dragonbinder. He was an exalted master-class World God; he naturally had to enter the Fog Sea to test himself! And yet, because they needed to stand guard for the Flamefairy, he had remained by Ning’s side instead of venturing into the more dangerous Fog Sea region.

“Sorry to have troubled you, brother Dragonbinder. I’ve made you waste quite a bit of time here in the outer region.” Ning sat down on a stone as he held out a flask of wine.

“It’s just two or three years, and I’ll be able to see a new Chaos Immortal be born. No big deal at all. Uh...wow. This is good wine. Good lord, brother Ji Ning...how much money did you spend on Immortal wine?” World God Dragonbinder was guzzling wine with gusto.

“Ten cubes,” Ning said.

“Nice, nice.” World God Dragonbinder certainly wasn’t willing to spend this much money on wine.

When Ning had departed from the Windsorce Ruins, he was laden down with many treasures. Thus, he chose to spend ten cubes of his wealth to purchase a great deal of fine Immortal wine. He was living in the Badlands Court and would often receive their disciples as his guests. How could he allow himself to be lacking in wine? The Immortal wine he had purchased had been created through many different valuable ingredients. Once it was consumed, it would actually help the imbiber by replenishing his Immortal ki.

Suddenly...

Rumble...

A dim sound rang out from the heavens above them.

The seated Ning and Dragonbinder both turned their heads to stare at the heavens. The vague image of a vortex of chaos energy could be seen swirling in the skies.

"We can even see the chaos vortex from within the Allgod Estate. There has to be an enormous flood of chaos energy in the outside world." World God Dragonbinder revealed a look of delight...and his words were spot on. An utterly enormous vortex of chaos energy had formed in the skies above the Allgod Chaosworld.

"The Flamefairy should've begun her breakthrough," World God Dragonbinder said. "Let everything return to the primordial chaos from whence it came. Let the Dao-seed grow and let all things be renewed..."

Ning felt eager as well.

He had received certain teachings from Daolord Solesky, and so he knew that breaking through to become a World-level expert would result a transformation on a fundamental level. When he thought of Su Youji's transformation, he felt even more anticipation towards his own. He had the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods], the [Sole True Body], and the mysterious azureflower mist energy. This was why he was comparable to a World God despite being an Elder God.

One could imagine how enormous his transformation would be upon becoming a World God! He would be on a completely different level of power!

A long period of time went by, but neither Ning nor Dragonbinder were in a rush.

Whoosh.

A peerless beauty suddenly appeared, wreathed in flames. She knelt down towards Ning and said gratefully, "Youji shall never forget the great kindness you have shown her, Master."

“It’s good that you know the importance of repaying the kindness of others.” World God Dragonbinder nodded. There were some retainers who would begin to treat their masters with disdain once they broke through and reached a higher level of power. Once their lifeblood oaths were completed, they would immediately depart.

“You are now a World-level expert. Hurry up and rise.” Ning hurriedly held the Flamefairy to her feet. He could sense the aura of a Chaos Immortal emanating from the rings of fire that wreathed her body, and he couldn’t help but sigh.

# Chapter 27: The First Mirrorsnow Painting

Ji Ning's retainer had just become a Chaos Immortal, but he himself had yet to make a breakthrough! Still, Ning was fairly happy. At least he got a powerful assistant out of this event! However, Su Youji was a new Chaos Immortal who didn't even have a suitable Dao weapon to use. Thus, she was actually weaker than most World-level experts; she could at most be considered to have reached the lowest benchmark of that level.

New Chaos Immortals with no suitable treasures and who hadn't had the chance to solidify their powers were actually quite weak. Usually, they'd find a private location and spend a few thousand years in solitary cultivation. Only when they increased in power to become comparable to normal World-level experts would they emerge from seclusion.

"Congratulations, Flamefairy. This breakthrough you just made represents a fundamental transformation," World God Dragonbinder said with a laugh. "From this day forth, you will no longer be the same person you once were."

Su Youji's eyes were shining with light and her heart was filled with many emotions.

Countless scenes from the past began to flash through her mind. Thanks to the technique she created, she was a woman of absolutely stunning charm. As a result, quite a few cultivators had desired to become Dao-companions. Some of them acted properly towards her, but others had been stuck at the Elder God or Ancestral Immortal level for so long that they had lost their rationality along with their hopes of making a breakthrough. As a result, they abandoned themselves to vices and would often try to kidnap alluring woman and use them to sate their own lusts. Someone like Su Youji, who was both powerful and mesmerizing, drove these men absolutely wild.

Su Youji's technique was special. Before becoming a World-level expert, she could not allow herself to lose her virginity. Thus, in many cases her only choice was to flee from those men rather than to submit to them. She

lived quite an arduous life as a result.

“Finally...finally...” Su Youji could sense how powerful she had become. The Jindan chaos region inside her body was filled with an enormous amount of World energy, giving her a sense of absolute power and control over herself and her surroundings.

“From this day forth, I am now Chaos Immortal Su Youji.”

A Chaos Immortal would be welcomed with open arms by any of the organizations of the Badlands Court. They would be ranked as one of the most high-level figures and be given tremendous power and authority.

“Since the Flamefairy has completed her breakthrough...brother Ji Ning, let us part ways here.” World God Dragonbinder said, “I’m planning to pay a visit to the Fog Sea.”

“Thank you for everything, senior apprentice-brother Dragonbinder,” Ning said.

“A minor matter.” World God Dragonbinder smiled as he began to walk away.

Only now did Su Youji come back to her senses. She hurriedly said, “Thank you, big brother Dragonbinder.”

“I wager others would have begged for a chance to serve as your protector, little sister!” World God Dragonbinder’s voice rang out from afar as he moved further and further away from them. Soon, only Ning and Su Youji were left.

“Thank you, Master.” Su Youji was filled with gratitude.

“Oh, right.” Ning waved his hand, causing that palm-sized fiery idol to appear once more. When she saw the idol appear, Su Youji’s eyes instantly lit up. The techniques contained within this idol were a perfect fit for her. The idol had a total of eight faces, one of which was related to a charm technique. This was the reason why she was immediately stimulated upon seeing the idol, resulting in her breaking through to become a Chaos Immortal.

Su Youji's eyes blazed with eagerness as she stared at that idol. This idol would truly be of tremendous use to her.

"Take it." Ning handed it over to her.

"B-but..." Su Youji didn't know what to say or do. She had taken part in the treasure auction as well, and thus she knew exactly how valuable a treasure like this was. It would probably start at a reserve price of roughly a thousand cubes!

"I'm giving it to you, so take it," Ning said.

"But...I..." Su Youji hesitated. In the end, this fiery idol was simply too alluring to her. She said in a low voice, "Master, just let me view it for an hour. I'll memorize the technique within it then give it back to you."

Ning shook his head. "What's the point of just memorizing the technique? This fiery idol has eight different types of conceptual intents radiating from it. It'll be of tremendous benefit to you in your cultivation. And I'm not giving it to you, I'm just letting you use it. When I want it back, you'll have to return it to me. So take it." Ning pressed the fiery idol into Su Youji's hands.

Su Youji's heart quivered as Ning took her hand into his own.

Although she had served him for quite some time, this was actually the first time they had touched.

"Alright." Su Youji nodded obediently.

"Right. I'm planning to go into the Fog Sea as well," Ning said. "Go ahead and enter the estate-world and focus on solidifying your current foundation. You've just broken through, after all."

"No need, Master." Su Youji waved her hand, causing the fiery idol to be drawn into her Jindan chaos region. "I only need to spend part of my time working on this idol. With it, I should be able to solidify my foundation in less than a century. Your golem is by my side as well; once I enter it and command it, I'll be able to unleash tremendous power from within. I won't be in any danger."

With such a detailed technique and helpful idol, her path to becoming a master-class Chaos Immortal was clear. It naturally wouldn't take her much time to solidify her foundation. If she didn't have the idol and instead had to work on her own, she probably would've needed a thousand years in order to succeed.

"Might as well." Ning nodded. Although Su Youji didn't have a Dao weapon, she did have that golem. If danger arose, she could instantly hide herself within that golem. She really wouldn't be in much danger.

"Come. Let us enter the Fog Sea."

Ning turned his head to stare off into the distance, where the vast, billowing Fog Sea could be seen. He could sense the ripples emanating from the Mirrorsnow Painting he had bound and its desire to enter the Fog Sea and reunite with the other painting there.

The Fog Sea was part of the 'inner region' of the Allgod Estate. It was far more dangerous than the Ten Thousand Mountains.

.....

Whoosh. Fog billowed everywhere.

Ning stood atop an earthen hill, staring off into the distance. Even at his level of visual acuity, the fog ensured that he could only see to a distance of a few hundred kilometers.

"It's up ahead." Ning pointed straight ahead. Thanks to his Mirrorsnow Painting, Ning could easily determine the location of his target. The toughest part of being in the Fog Sea was that one would be unable to find one's bearings. Anyone who spent a bit of time within it would quickly discover that they could no longer tell the directions apart. This was true even for World-level experts. But of course, if you walked in one direction for a long enough period of time, sooner or later you'd make it out of the Fog Sea.

"A lake?"

After walking forward for tens of thousands of kilometers, Ning saw a placid, almost mirror-like lake up ahead. The lake was quite wide, so vast

that Ning couldn't see the other side of it. It was so still here that not even any ripples could be seen on the lake's surface. Ning did, however, get a vague sense of danger emanating from the area.

Su Youji looked towards Ning. "I sense as though this lake..."

"I sensed it as well." Ning nodded.

"Should we walk on the surface of the lake? Fly over it? Or go around it?" Su Youji waited for Ning to decide.

Ning frowned as he glanced at the great lake before them. Finally, he said, "Let's go around it."

"Right." This was Su Youji's preference as well.

The two began to circle around the lake. However, the lake truly was quite enormous. Based on how much time they spent walking around it, Ning judged that it had to be more than a hundred thousand kilometers long.

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Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh.

Ripples suddenly appeared on the surface of the formerly-still lake. Then, a golden head began to silently emerge from the waters beneath. This golden head had a pair of golden wings where a human would have ears. It stared off into the distance towards a place which Ji Ning and Su Youji had walked past just a short while ago. Some time later, the strange creature slowly sank beneath the waves once more.

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Ning and Su Youji continued their journey after going past the lake, moving with slow caution. Whenever they encountered a place they felt was dangerous, they would avoid it. This was the Fog Sea, after all. This was a terrifying place which spelled death for nearly half the World-level experts who entered it! Even though Ning had the power of a master-class World God, he still didn't dare to act rashly. In addition, his true goal was merely to find the Mirrorsnow Painting.

"We are almost there. We should be less than fifty thousand kilometers away," Ning said. He had spent more than a month in here with Su Youji and had walked more than ten million kilometers. The reason why it had taken them this long was because they had to avoid quite a few dangerous areas.

The past month had been fairly safe. They had only engaged in battle a single time when they had encountered a scorpion-shaped bugbeast that had just barely reached the World level of power. Ning had simply taken out his Pentabolt Gourd and effortless killed the bugbeast with a thunderblast.

"It's up ahead."

"There it is."

Ning and Su Youji had just reached a mountain. Halfway up the mountain, there was an elegant-looking palace which had three characters carved onto it: Yi River Palace.

"Yi River Palace?" Ning frowned.

"What's wrong?" Su Youji glanced at Ning, puzzled.

"This doesn't make sense." Ning frowned. The Fog Sea had quite a few dangerous locations within it. Many generations of cultivators had ventured within the Fog Sea, resulting in many of its dangerous locations being marked down. The Yi River Palace was one such location! It held valuable treasures but was also filled with tremendous danger.

According to the intelligence report which Ning had acquired from Daolord Solesky, although the Mirrorsnow Painting was in the Fog Sea it wasn't located within the Yi River Palace.

"For some reason, the Mirrorsnow Painting must've been moved from its original location into the Yi River Palace," Ning mused to himself.

Boom! Ning gave the gates to the Yi River Palace a hard shove.

Rumble...the gates slowly swung open.

"Let's go in," Ning said. "Youji, the deeper parts of the Yi River Palace are

filled with tremendous danger. We can't get in too deep. Let me scout out the outer perimeter of the palace first."

"Alright." Youji nodded.

The two carefully stepped into the estate. The Yi River Palace was extremely large and it had a front hall, a main hall, an inner hall, and many side halls. According to the information Ning had, the other halls of the Yi River Palace were fairly safe, but the main hall was filled with tremendous danger. However, the main hall also had the most treasures.

"The Mirrorsnow Painting. It doesn't seem to be in the main palace..." Ning could sense from his attunement to his own painting that this second one was actually located in a side hall.

# Chapter 28: Be Our Slaves

Ji Ning led Su Youji towards the direction of the side hall.

Whoosh.

A streak of gray fog quickly surged out from that distant side hall, moving far faster than the limits of the Heavenly Daos as it poured out of the Yi River Palace.

"That thing is carrying the Mirrorsnow Painting!" Ning's face changed.  
"Chase it down!"

He could sense that the Mirrorsnow Painting had originally been within the side hall, but it was now receding from him at high speed. Clearly, it was being taken away by that gray streak of mist.

Swoosh. Swoosh.

Ning and Su Youji immediately chased after it at high speed. Ning had always been extremely fast, while Su Youji was now a Chaos Immortal. Thanks to her powerful Immortal energy and the Jindan chaos region inside her body supporting her, she was now also able to easily overcome the limits of the Heavenly Daos and move just a tiny bit slower than Ning himself did. But of course, this was with Ning not using the Thunderlight Wings.

Boom! An inch-thick streak of golden light shot out of Ning's eyes, allowing him to clearly make out the true form of that fleeing streak of gray fog.

Although it looked like gray fog, it was actually a strange beast that had a crocodilian body and a dragon-like head. Its four stubby legs propelled it forward at high speed, allowing it move faster than the limits of the Heavenly Daos as gray mist emanated from its body.

"A bugbeast of some sort."

"It most likely is one of the bugbeasts which Daolord Allgod once reared."

Both Ning and Su Youji were able to see and identify the creature.

Many bugbeasts lived within the Fog Sea region. It must be understood that Daolord Allgod was skilled in many things, including alchemy, artificing, formations, and more. He had also reached an extremely high level of skill in the art of rearing bugbeasts. Even though he had died long ago, certain formations within the Fog Sea region continuously nurtured and gave birth to multiple generations of World-level bugbeasts.

“GRWAAAR!” The graymist beast let out a howl. Its body suddenly split into nine different pieces, each of which began to flee towards a different direction.

“Don’t even think about fleeing!” Ning roared. He pulled out a giant gourd with his left hand, immediately uncorking it.

Rumble...

Countless thunderbolts blasted out from within the gourd, instantly covering the entire region but centering around the area which included the nine streaks of gray mist that were beginning to flee. The [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] technique was limited to the speed of the Heavenly Daos, but this Pentabolt Gourd which Ning had purchased during the treasure auction contained five different types of chaos lightning, each of which was able to effortlessly breach the speed of light. They all moved much faster than Ning himself.

The five types of lightning crackled throughout the area and thundered around the gray mist.

“EEEE! An ear-piercing, soul-piercing cry.

Eight of the nine streaks of gray mist instantly vanished. The remaining streak of gray mist quickly began to expand in size, its scaly crocodilian body beginning to emerge as well. The beast’s body was resisting the attacks of these five types of chaos lightning, and it turned to glare at Ning, its grayish-white eyes filled with rage.

“Hand over that sword-ki diagram and I’ll spare your life,” Ning sent mentally.

“You’ll never catch me.” The creature’s gravelly voice rang out in Ning’s mind.

Swish.

The scaly crocodilian creature once more transformed into mist. This time, the misty gray aura surrounding it brightened dramatically as it began to fly off into the distance at a speed which rendered Ning speechless. Even if he used his Thunderlight Wings, he still wouldn’t be able to catch up to it. His only choice was to use the Pentabolt Gourd to release those five streaks of chaos lightning to slow the creature down... and yet, although the creature seemed to be weakened by the lightning it didn’t slow down in the slightest.

“We can’t catch up to it, Master.” Su Youji was worried. The bugbeast had already flown out of the range of the five types of lightning. This place was quite dangerous, and Ning didn’t dare to let the lightning reach out to a much greater distance, for fear of accidentally striking and irritating other powerful bugbeasts.

“I can sense that it’s been injured.” Ning chuckled. The final blasts of lightning had injured the creature. Although it had managed to escape, its aura had been noticeably weakened.

“It won’t be able to escape me.” Ning could continuously sense the exact location of the Mirrorsnow Painting. So long as the creature remained within the Allgod Estate, Ning would still be able to sense its location.

A short while later.

“It is up ahead. It isn’t moving,” Ning sent.

Soon, Ning and Su Youji saw the creature. It was a crocodilian bugbeast with black scales, and it was resting as it lay atop a giant boulder. It instantly noticed Ning’s arrival and immediately transformed into an aura of gray mist as it once more began to flee.

Bugbeasts were artificially created lifeforms. They had tremendous strength and certain special gifts, and they used these advantages when they fought. However, they didn’t have divine power or Immortal energy.

Thus, they were unable to bind magic treasures to themselves. In other words, the bugbeast hadn't been able to bind the sword-ki painting and thus couldn't sense Ning's location.

Boom! Ning didn't have enough time to chase after the creature. He instead once more pulled out the Pentabolt Gourd and released those five types of chaos lightning to attack.

The aura of the fleeing streak of gray mist began to noticeably weaken yet again.

Swoosh. Swoosh.

Ning and Su Youji continued their chase.

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"I can sense ripples coming from over there."

"There's a battle happening nearby."

Two men who were seated in the lotus position rose to their feet. One was dressed in golden robes while the other was dressed in black robes. Both had dark, swarthy skin, and their faces were covered with green floral tattoos. Both emanated auras of tremendous power as well. One was a World God, the other a Chaos Immortal.

"Let's go take a look." The two exchanged a glance, then quietly began to move towards the direction of the ripples.

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"It is still fleeing." Ning and Su Youji continued their pursuit of the bugbeast. By now, the bugbeast could tell that the two cultivators probably had a way to track it and so it continued to frantically run as fast as it could.

"It's moving farther and farther away." Ning was worried. "The bugbeast knows the Fog Sea much better than us. It'll probably end up hiding itself within a dangerous location. We have to catch up to it soon. If too much time passes, we'll be in trouble."

"HALT!" Suddenly, an icy shout rang out from afar and blasted into the

ears of Ning and Su Youji.

“Eh?”

Ning and Su Youji had been flying at high speed. Both frowned and turned to look at the two figures which had appeared behind them. These two figures both emanated auras of power and savagery.

“Master.” Su Youji’s face tightened as she sent a quick mental message. “I know these two. One is known as World God Foxblaze while the other is Chaos Immortal Foxbold. The two belong to the same race and are extremely savage.”

“Oho, isn’t this Flamefairy Su Youji?” Chaos Immortal Foxbold was dressed in golden robes, and his eyes lit up when he saw the Flamefairy. “You actually broke through to become a Chaos Immortal! I hadn’t heard the news. It must be recent. Huh. Come to think of it, a short while ago the chaos energy within the Allgod Estate was in a state of great turmoil. Was that when you made your breakthrough?”

“Su Youji?” The black-robed World God Foxblaze’s eyes lit up as well. “Oho, what a rare treat...”

Su Youji was a peerless beauty of tremendous charm. After becoming a Chaos Immortal, her aura and demeanor had only grown more graceful. Both of these World-level experts felt a certain itchiness in their hearts when they saw her.

“Please make way! We are busy,” Su Youji barked.

“Make way? Su Youji, you just recently became a World-level expert. Instead of finding a safe place to stabilize your foundation, you instead came here to the Fog Sea. You are lucky that it was the two of us who found you.” World God Foxblaze laughed coldly. “It would be simplicity itself for us to kill you, but we’ll give you a chance to stay alive.”

Newly ascended World-level experts were very weak, especially Chaos Immortals. Chaos Immortals had fairly weak bodies; when they first made their breakthrough, they could be considered as having just barely reached the World-level threshold of power. Although World God Foxblaze and his

friend weren't that powerful, they had still been alive for a very long period of time. It would indeed be quite easy for them to slay a newly ascended Chaos Immortal.

"Right, right. We'll give you a chance to live." Chaos Immortal Foxbold stared appraising at Su Youji, licking his lips. "It's simple. You simply need to swear a lifeblood oath to be our slave."

"Slave?" A layer of frost appeared on Su Youji's face.

"Don't worry. You are a World-level expert as well; we won't make things too hard for you. After you become our slave, all you'll have to do is engage in 'dual cultivation' with us every so often. Dual cultivation is a source of great joy, as you'll soon come to know." World God Foxblaze's eyes grew colder. "But if you refuse, today is the day you die."

"All we ask is that you engage in 'dual cultivation' with us. You'll have a much higher position than all the rest of our slaves," Chaos Immortal Foxbold agreed.

The two had many women, but female Chaos Immortals of such peerless beauty and charm were incredibly rare. Most importantly of all, Su Youji had just recently become a Chaos Immortal. She was still very weak and would be easily captured.

Both of their gazes were fixed upon Su Youji.

As for Ji Ning?

He was merely an Elder God. The two completely ignored him!

"The two of you are going a bit too far." Ning's voice rang out. He didn't want to fight as that would distract him from chasing after the fleeing bugbeast.

"World-level experts are speaking. How dare you interrupt us, you ant?" World God Foxblaze looked at Ning, a lofty look in his eyes. He naturally felt complete contempt towards a mere Elder God like Ning.

"Puny Elder God, how dare you speak so rashly before us? I was planning to simply enslave you as well. I suppose I might as well just kill you

instead." Chaos Immortal Foxbold glanced at Ning as well, a similar look of arrogance in his gaze. He, too, felt as though he was speaking to an ant.

# Chapter 29: Level Experts

An island within Ji Ning's estate world.

"Wild Dog. Blacksun." A booming voice echoed across the great island. Elder God Wilddog and Elder God Blacksun had been seated amongst their fellow Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals, eating and chatting, but now the two immediately rose to their feet. They called out in unison, "Master."

"Take control of your golems and await my signal."

"Yes, Master."

Elder God Wilddog and Elder God Blacksun simultaneously transformed into two tall, muscular black golems. Previously, the golems had been fiery red in color, but they had been cosmetically altered and recolored to black in order to conceal their true power. Once you bound a golem, you could completely withdraw and suppress its aura of power. In fact, golems with spirits controlling them such as Rocky were almost like living creatures. Rocky was able to completely suppress his own aura and transform into a boulder that not even Ning would be able to detect.

The two black golems stood there at the edges of the island, awaiting Ning's summons.

"We're about to enter combat."

"Yes. We've been waiting forever for a real battle like this. All we were doing prior to this was nothing more than sparring."

Both were filled with an eagerness to do battle. The golems they commanded filled them with tremendous self-confidence. It must be understood that Ning had to spend more than six hundred cubes of chaos nectar to purchase these three golems...and that was at the discounted treasure auction price. Normally, each of these three golems would go for significantly more than two hundred cubes of chaos nectar. Each of the three were individually more powerful than Rocky, and they were able to join together in a formation as well.

The outside world. The Fog Sea region of the Allgod Estate.

World God Foxblaze and Chaos Immortal Foxbold both glanced disdainfully at Ning, ignoring him after mocking him. In their eyes, he truly was nothing more than an ant-like presence. They were on a completely different level of power; why would they pay him any heed?

Their gazes turned once more to Flamefairy Su Youji. World God Foxblaze spoke out: "Su Youji, if you wish to live a long life, you have to learn when to compromise. We won't make your lifeblood oath too harsh."

"All you have to do is serve us in dual cultivation. It'll be fun." Chaos Immortal Foxbold truly looked forward to enjoying the pleasing company of this truly ravishing female Chaos Immortal. He never thought that a chance like this would come so quickly.

The two alternated between threatening her and persuading her. They wouldn't be able to overpower her and force her to serve them; even if they did manage to capture her, she would be able to effortlessly self-detonate herself. It must be understood that even slaves could easily choose to self-detonate themselves. Thus, while an owner could oppress and coerce their slaves, they still had ensure that their slaves weren't driven to utter despair. Otherwise, their slaves could choose to be disobedient. When Daolord Windsource had commanded his slaves to accompany him into death, many of them had cursed and railed at him for his actions. Alas, all they could do was curse, nothing else.

"Come here."

"Come, Su Youji." The two stared hungrily at the Flamefairy.

Su Youji's face was so cold, it looked as though it was covered by a layer of frost. She sent to the nearby Ning, "Master, what should we do?"

"Since they insist on dying...then let's just go ahead and spend a little bit of time to get rid of them." Ning glanced at the two World-level figures. "Kill them!"

To be honest, Ning truly didn't wish to get into this fight. Killing World-

level experts wasn't a simple task. World God Foxblaze was an elite World God while Chaos Immortal Foxbold was merely an ordinary one. Ning was completely capable of slaying the two of them, but it would still take him quite a bit of time. This was why he had been hoping he could talk the two of them into getting out of his way.

"We can hunt down the bugbeast later. Given that I can sense its location, I'm sure it'll hide somewhere it feels is very safe." The more Ning thought about it, the angrier he became.

"Fine." Su Youji suddenly clenched her teeth and said aloud, "Show me your lifeblood oath."

"Ahahaha, that's more like it!"

"Good, good, good! What a fine beauty you are. Don't worry. We couldn't bear to mistreat you."

World God Foxblaze and Chaos Immortal Foxbold were delighted upon hearing her words. Just like that, a lovely female Chaos Immortal had fallen into their clutches. What a stroke of great luck! World God Foxblaze waved his hand, causing a golden pearl to fly out. "This is my oathstone. Take a good luck, my pretty. If there's anything you don't like, we can change it."

"Ehehe." Chaos Immortal Foxbold felt more and more excited. This was better than finding an entire stash of valuable treasures. They never would've even imagined in their wildest dreams that such a female slave would fall into their clutches.

"I simply can't believe how lucky we are. As soon as Su Youji broke through to become a Chaos Immortal, she ran into the two of us." Both of them were filled with eagerness. They could already visualize the fantastic scenes of the two of them cavorting with her, causing their hearts to blaze with lust.

Ning was standing next to Su Youji. His eyes suddenly turned cold.

"Attack!"

His voice echoed within his estate-world as a black gourd suddenly

appeared in front of him. The black gourd vomited out countless streaks of lightning, completely filling the region with five types of chaos lightning that surrounded and attacked Chaos Immortal Foxbold and World God Foxblaze.

“Shit!” The two blanched as they saw this happen. Chaos Immortal Foxbold’s robes instantly glowed with light, forming a protective barrier around him. Alas, the five types of chaos lightning were simply too powerful, causing the barrier to completely shatter as they crashed straight through it and against Foxbold.

A series of flying daggers had also appeared around Chaos Immortal Foxbold, but they were only able to deflect part of the lightning. The rest of the lightning crashed directly against his body.

Boom! An ugly look was on Chaos Immortal Foxbold’s face as he vomited out a mouthful of blood. He sent frantically, “Save me, big brother!”

“Shit. That’s one powerful lightning treasure.” World God Foxblaze instantly was both enraged and unnerved. “Hold on for a short while. I’ll capture Su Youji and take that gourd of hers.”

The gourd was hovering in front of Ning, who was standing right next to Su Youji. Thus, both of the enemies believed the gourd to belong to Su Youji.

The five types of lightning continued to furiously attack the two World-level experts. However, World God Foxblaze was quite a powerful figure, and he was dressed in a suit of low-grade Dao armor. His divine body was completely capable of withstanding the attacks from these five types of divine lightning.

Swish!

World God Foxblaze transformed into a streak of light, flying towards Su Youji with a furious look in his eyes.

Right at this moment...

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Three golems suddenly appeared out of nowhere. One was Rocky the stone titan, while the other two were pitch-black golems. These three golems simultaneously charged towards Chaos Immortal Foxbold from three separate directions! World God Foxblaze was sprinting straight towards Ji Ning and Su Youji and so wasn't able to turn in time, allowing all three golems to charge straight past him and towards Chaos Immortal Foxbold.

"They are fast!" World God Foxblaze's face changed.

"Save me, big brother!" Chaos Immortal Foxbold was shocked as well. When he saw those three golems speeding towards him, he immediately understood that they were definitely World-level golems. He was utterly terrified and quickly sent out a distress call. It must be understood that he merely had the power of an ordinary World-level expert and was merely a Chaos Immortal. He had already been driven to distraction and unnerved by the five types of divine lightning that filled every inch of this area.

And now three golems were charging towards him as well? What was he supposed to do?

"Die." The black golem controlled by Elder God Blacksun struck out with a massive fist, sending an enormously powerful punch towards Chaos Immortal Foxbold.

"Kill." Elder God Wilddog delivered a vicious kick towards him.

"GRWAAAR!" Rocky sent two furious palm-blows towards him as well.

The five types of lightning in the surrounding area continued to furiously assault Chaos Immortal Foxbold as well. As for World God Foxblaze, he had charged towards Ji Ning and Su Youji at maximum speed and was completely unable to make it back in time to save Foxbold.

"NO!!!"

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Golems had an innate advantage in raw strength to begin with, with less than one in a thousand World Gods being comparable to World-level golems in strength. The only way you could beat a golem was by

suppressing them with your superior insights into the Dao, but Chaos Immortal Foxbold had already been completely shut down by Ning's Pentabolt Gourd attack. All he could do was scream repeatedly as he tried to use his blade barrier to block the attacks. "NOOOOO!"

BOOM!!!!

Chaos Immortal Foxbold was reduced to dust.

"What?!" World God Foxblaze had been charging towards Ning and Su Youji, but upon seeing this he blanched. "Those golems are way too powerful. Those are no ordinary golems! Each of them has to be worth at least a hundred cubes of chaos nectar."

Whoosh! Right at this moment, Su Youji transformed into a black golem as well. World God Foxblaze was now quite close to her and she didn't dare fight him in close combat.

"What?!" Upon seeing Su Youji transform into a black golem, World God Foxblaze felt as though his heart had been gripped by icy fingers. Four golems? He could tell that every single one of those golems was probably comparable to him in strength. If the four joined forces, they would completely dominated him.

"Time to leave." World God Foxblaze no longer had any interest in tangling with Su Youji. He transformed into a streak of light, beginning to flee.

Whoosh. A pair of lightning wings suddenly appeared on Ning's back. The wings fluttered slightly, sending Ning flying out at tremendous speed. Although World God Foxblaze also flew fairly quickly, the five types of lightning slowed him down somewhat.

"Eh?" World God Foxblaze stared at the figure who had suddenly appeared before him.

The white-robed youth stood there, his Thunderlight Wings spread wide and a blood-red sword in his hands. The youth stared at Foxblaze coldly. "You won't be able to escape!"

# Chapter 30: Willing to be Enslaved

World God Foxblaze was astonished by the speed of this white-robed youth, and he was able to tell right away that the Thunderlight Wings on Ning's back were quite extraordinary. However, he wasn't afraid; rather, he was delighted. If he killed this Elder God, then this extraordinary treasure would become his, right? He didn't even consider the possibility that he might not be able to defeat this Elder God. Even the most monstrously talented Elder Gods would at most be comparable to ordinary World Gods...and he was an elite one!

"Puny Elder God, you overestimate your abilities. Die!" World God Foxblaze drew out a curved scimitar, then used it to chop towards Ning. It was like a streak of crescent moonlight had suddenly struck out.

Ning showed no mercy at all, immediately using his most powerful attack with his most powerful weapon, the Eternal weapon Violetjewel. He delivered a powerful, furious overhead chop with Violetjewel, his weapon moving far faster than the speed of light. As Violetjewel struck out in a cruel blur, Ning also activated as much of its quintessence core as he could, giving his weapon an utterly terrifying amount of power.

At this moment in time, Violetjewel was so incredibly sharp and powerful that even an ordinary mortal who casually brandished it would unleash a blast of sword-ki that could easily chop a mountain apart. But of course, there was no way that a mortal would ever come into possession of a weapon such as this.

BOOM!

Violetjewel's sword-light clashed head-on against the crescent moon of saber-light.

The crescent moon of saber-light was blasted apart, while World God Foxblaze was knocked flying backwards. He stared at the midair figure of Ning, his eyes absolutely huge and filled with disbelief. How was this possible? How? He was an exalted World God who had been alive and training for countless years and had reached the 'elite' level. How could he

possibly be at a completely disadvantage in this fight?

There was least a full level's worth of difference between him and his foe!

This Elder God actually had the power of a master-class World God? How was this possible? How could anyone be this much of a freak? Even if this Elder God was wielding an Eternal weapon, it should've been impossible for him to be this powerful.

BOOM! The terrifying force of Ning's blow had knocked World God Foxblaze flying backwards, and the five types of lightning in the area continued to furiously hammer down against his body. Foxblaze's situation was growing more dire by the moment.

"Kill."

"Kill."

The three black golems and the stone titan quickly charged towards World God Foxblaze. Su Youji's black golem was already quite close to Ning, and so it was the first to arrive and strike at him.

Whoosh! The black golem's fierce claws lashed out with dominating power, leaving a cruel fiery blur behind in the air as the golem struck at Foxblaze.

Bang! Although Foxblaze frantically lifted up his scimitar to block, he was knocked backwards yet again. Although he was actually roughly on par with the black golems, he had been completely knocked off his game by Ning's attack. That first failure was causing a cascade of problems for him, and the entire situation was extremely grim.

"Die!" Elder God Wilddog and Elder God Blacksun's golems arrived and began to attack, as did the stone titan Rocky.

"Hmph." Ning charged towards Foxblaze as well, leaving a trail of dazzling electric light in the air behind him.

Foxblaze was completely trapped!

Although the four golems were somewhat inferior to him in technique

and skill, they were superior to him in power and speed. He was able to deal with one of them but four was simply too much. The worst thing was, the white-robed Elder God he had thought to be the weakest cultivator present was actually the most terrifying figure of them all!

He was a terrifying Elder God who had the power of a master-class World God! These types of Elder Gods only existed in legends!

“Four golems, five types of divine lightning, those electric wings...I was wrong. I was completely wrong from the start! How could Su Youji possibly afford treasures such as these? They most likely all belong to that white-robed Elder God! Su Youji is merely his servant as well!”

“N-n-no...I can’t just die here...”

“I can’t!”

Although World God Foxblaze felt regret and self-pity for being driven to such dire straits, he also felt a powerful urge to stay alive.

“Transform!” World God Foxblaze instantly transformed to gain a total of six arms, each of which was now wielding a scimitar. His aura grew slightly more powerful as well, and even his eyes began to turn red. Clearly, he was now in an utterly berserk state.

The only way for him to survive was for him to go all out!

“KILL!” He immediately charged towards the stone titan, because he could tell right away that all three black golems were identical and belonged to a single set. He could sense that they were arrayed together into a formation and so he naturally chose to go against the stone titan instead.

“Stop him, rocky.” Ning immediately sent a mental message over.

“Don’t worry, Master. My talents lie in tying down foes.” Rocky’s palms suddenly expanded dramatically in size as his stony body suddenly began to flow like a liquid.

BOOM! World God Foxblaze exchanged blows with Rocky, the force of the collision causing a few ripples to appear on the liquid-like surface of

Rocky's body. However, Rocky himself didn't take so much as a single step back.

"What?!" World God Foxblaze was shocked.

As for the three black golems, they once more charged towards him and attacked him.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The four mighty golems surrounded and assaulted this solitary World God.

World God Foxblaze still refused to give up. Although blows were raining down upon him, he had a set of Dao armor and a tough divine body. World Gods weren't easily killed, and he continued to do his best to find a way to survive this assault. Alas, the three black golems moved together in perfect unison, giving him no chance to flee whatsoever.

"N-no..."

"Give up!" Right at this moment, Ning arrived. He struck out with Violetjewel, sending that terrifying streak of bloody sword-light towards Foxblaze once more.

"NO!" World God Foxblaze truly felt despair now.

BOOM! The sword-blow knocked him flying once more... and then, with a series of booms, two of the black golems smashed him into the ground.

If he was a World God who specialized in defense, he wouldn't have been taken down so quickly. He would've been able to keep fighting for a somewhat longer period of time. Ji Ning, for example, had the Heartsword stance that gave him perfect control over his defensive sword-arts.

But of course, the Dao of the Sword was an offensive Dao that had tremendous advantages in close combat! Although World God Foxblaze used the scimitar, his specialty lay in a Dao of the Wind. This gave him certain advantages in speed and power in close combat, but once he lost the upper hand he would quickly be defeated.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Once Foxblaze was knocked down to the ground,

the four golems began to rain a wild storm of blows upon his body.

As for Ning, he stood there to one side, not taking part in this. The blow he had just delivered was the final straw that had broken the camel's back. World God Foxblaze would no longer have any chance of turning the tables on his attackers.

"Go." Ning willed a long rope to suddenly appear next to him. The rope agilely slithered through the air like a serpent, quickly tying up the completely beaten World God Foxblaze and rendering him securely and completely incapacitated.

A look of utter despair was in Foxblaze's eyes.

"Come." Ning turned his head to glance backwards. The black gourd that had been spewing endless streams of lightning quickly flew towards Ning, coming to a halt within his hands.

Ning held the black gourd with one hand as he stared downwards at the tied and bound Foxblaze.

"It really...really..." When Foxblaze saw the black gourd fly to Ning, he couldn't help but mumble to himself, "The gourd really does belong to him."

"Master, this Foxblaze fellow was much harder to deal with than Foxbold," Su Youji said with a laugh.

"He insisted on setting off on a path of no return. He has no one to blame for his death but himself," Elder God Wilddog growled.

"Spare me. Spare me!"

World God Foxblaze was completely trussed up. He stared at Ning.  
"Spare me and I'll give you all my treasures."

"You idiot. Do you really take us for a fool? After we kill you, all of your treasures will be ours regardless." Su Youji let out a cold laugh. Towards outsiders, she remained as ill-tempered and explosive as ever before.

"I-I..." World God Foxblaze stared wildly at Ning, then gritted his teeth.  
"I'm willing to be your retainer."

"No need." Ning shook his head.

"No. No!" World God Foxblaze took a deep breath. "I'm willing to be your slave! Your slave! I, World God Foxblaze, am willing to be your slave!"

"Master?" Su Youji, Elder God Wilddog, and Elder God Blacksun all turned to look at Ning.

"My slave? You honor me too much. I'm not interested, and so... it's best you simply die." Ning lifted up his black gourd, then activated it with a thought. A powerful sucking power suddenly emerged from it and was applied to World God Foxblaze.

Foxblaze was instantly sucked towards the gourd, shrinking as he flew towards the gourd's opening.

"No... you... can't possibly..."

He was in a state of utter disbelief. Someone actually refused to accept him, an exalted World God, as a slave? A moment later, he was drawn into the Pentabolt Gourd. A few moments after that a rope flew out from the gourd, then Ning resealed it.

Trapped within the Pentabolt Gourd, Foxblaze would suffer perpetual attacks from those five types of lightning. Sooner or later, his divine power would run out and he would be ground into dust.

"Why, Master? He was a World God, after all." Su Youji and the others looked curiously at Ning.

"I wanted to kill him, so I did." Ning's response was quite calm.

A World God? What of it?

He didn't like people with Foxblaze's character. He'd feel uncomfortable having the man around, and a mere elite World God wouldn't be of much use to him anyhow. Any of his four golems was comparable to Foxblaze in power, after all.

As for selling him off into slavery? He wouldn't be worth nearly as much as a golem. Golems were absolutely loyal to their masters, after all. Foxblaze would most likely go for just a hundred cubes of chaos nectar at

most, but the problem was that he knew how strong Ji Ning actually was. For now, Ning wished to keep his true power a secret.

He wouldn't worry about the information leaking after he became a World God, and wouldn't have minded selling Foxblaze off at that time... but who knew how long that would take? And by then, would he care about a petty hundred cubes of chaos nectar.

"Might as well kill him. I feel more comfortable doing that." High-level cultivators had to follow their own hearts and their own paths to begin with.

"At my current level of power, killing elite World Gods still requires a bit of effort." Ning reflected on this recent fight. "Without the four golems helping out, things probably wouldn't be so easy."

Thanks to the four golems, he had been able to kill an elite World God in a fairly short period of time.

"Wild Dog, Blacksun, go back and get some rest. Await my orders," Ning instructed.

"Yes," both Elder Gods said respectfully, their eyes filled with blazing eagerness.

What a show of utter dominance.

They had almost instantly slain a Chaos Immortal and a World God. The World God had begged to be enslaved, but their master didn't even want to bother with enslaving him. This was true dominance! Their master truly was far too powerful. How mighty would he become when he actually reached the World level?

Whoosh. After Rocky, Elder God Wilddog, and Elder God Blacksun were all transported back into the estate-world, Ning turned to look towards Su Youji. "Youji, let's get back to our hunt for that bugbeast."

"Right." Su Youji nodded as well.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Relying on his attunement to the Mirrorsnow Painting, Ning quickly led Su Youji towards the location of the second painting.

# Chapter 31: Grove of Monoliths

Ji Ning led Su Youji forward, using his attunement to the painting to sense where they should go.

The bugbeast had already come to a halt, causing Ning to feel quite uneasy. Although most bugbeasts were fairly dumb, World-level bugbeasts were both powerful and rather clever. Since this one knew that Ning had a way to track it, for it to come to a halt could only mean that it had found a place it felt was very safe.

Whoosh. Whoosh.

Ning and Su Youji flew past one mountain peak after another, shrouded by mist. Every so often they could thread their way past forests or deep gorges. They advanced with great caution and deliberation, and as a result spent nearly an hour before they reached their destination. The bugbeasts had come to a halt, after all; it didn't matter too much if they were moving a bit slower than before.

"It should be up ahead." Ning was standing atop a towering, jagged boulder as he mentally conversed with the fiery-robed Su Youji.

"Let's take it slow," Ning sent mentally.

He was the vanguard and Su Youji was the rearguard.

The two began to move even more slowly than before. Thanks to the mist which permeated this region, Ning was only able to see to a distance of a few hundred kilometers. As he slowly drew closer and closer to the destination, he could sense a terrifyingly powerful aura suddenly sweep towards them from afar. Both Ning and Su Youji blanched at the power of this aura.

"Where are we?" Suddenly, Ning saw something up ahead.

A few hundred kilometers up ahead, there was a single giant monolith that was roughly three hundred meters tall and surrounded by mist.

"The Grove of Monoliths?" Su Youji's face tightened. "Master, this seems to be the Grove of Monoliths."

"Let's move a bit closer and check it out," Ning replied. His heart clenched as they slowly moved closer and closer to the monolith. Soon, they were roughly ten kilometers away from the first monolith and were able to see a second monolith of similar size and shape that had been embedded into the ground.

This second monolith had a red-winged beast that lay coiled atop it which emanated an aura of tremendous savagery.

Ning frowned. They continued to advance, keeping a careful distance from the creature. One monolith after another entered their field of vision, each of which was roughly three hundred meters tall. The monoliths had all been planted deeply into the ground, and many of them had terrifying bugbeasts that lay coiled on top of them. Other monoliths were surrounded by magic treasures and weapons which had auras of tremendous power. Most of them were Dao-level weapons or treasures.

"Master..." Su Youji grew increasingly nervous. This was a terrifyingly dangerous part of the Fog Sea, the 'Grove of Monoliths'.

"Withdraw." Ning finally gave the other.

The two carefully, quietly, and rapidly retreated from this location, only coming to a halt after they entered a nearby copse of trees.

"It actually went into hiding within the Grove of Monoliths." Ning frowned.

"This is all the fault of World God Foxblaze and Chaos Immortal Foxbold. They delayed us at a critical moment! Otherwise, we probably would've been able to catch up to that heavily injured bugbeast." The Flamefairy couldn't help but feel quite upset by this. She knew exactly how much her master needed that sword-ki painting, and it now seemed evident that the painting would be unobtainable.

Ning wasn't in a very good mood right now.

He had felt rather exuberant after slaying World God Foxblaze and Chaos Immortal Foxbold, as this was the first time he had personally slain a World-level expert, and two of them at that! However, Ning now felt

rather resentful at all this.

"They ruined everything!" Ning gritted his teeth.

"What should I do? What should my next plan of action be?" Ning began to ponder.

The Ten Thousand Mountains was the outer region of this world.

The Fog Sea was part of the inner region.

The Fog Sea had many dangerous areas within it, and the Grove of Monoliths was definitely ranked as one of the deadliest locations. Based on the experiences of the many cultivators who had adventured into it, this was a region that took up roughly ten thousand kilometers of space, and within this region there were many enormous monoliths that had been inserted into the ground.

For some unknown reason, bugbeasts were highly attracted to these monoliths. Thus, bugbeasts would often rest within the Grove of Monoliths, with dozens of them nesting in this region at any given time. All of these bugbeasts were World-level creatures. Bugbeasts were fairly unintelligent and did not understand the mysteries of the Dao. They had to rely on their physical strength and their innate gifts to fight, and so most of them only had the power of ordinary World Gods! A minority were comparable to elite World Gods and a tiny number of them were comparable to master-class World Gods.

Alas, they did have one advantage: they existed in overwhelmingly large numbers. The Grove of Monoliths often had around a hundred World-level bugbeasts within it at any given moment in time. There were simply too many of them! If any cultivator dared to trespass within the Grove, that cultivator would immediately suffer the attacks of every single bugbeast there! As more time passed, bugbeasts from other areas would also hurry to the Grove to reinforce their fellows, causing the situation to grow increasingly dangerous!

The Grove of Monoliths was definitely a place of incredible danger. Only supreme World Gods would be able to survive in that place, but if they were unlucky enough to encounter particularly powerful bugbeasts they

might still perish!

"The Grove of Monoliths is too dangerous." Su Youji looked at Ning. "Master, according to the information we acquired regarding the Allgod Estate, only supreme World Gods have a chance of surviving a trip into the Grove of Monoliths. If we go in there, we'd probably be doomed."

"Mm." Ning nodded. "It's true. We have no hope of surviving that place. I knew that damned bugbeast would pick a troublesome place to hide." Ning continued to ponder on this matter but could find no solutions.

The place was simply too dangerous.

All bugbeasts had a fetish for collecting magic treasures. Although they couldn't use them, they viewed those items as their spoils of combat. Thus, the hundred-plus bugbeasts in the Grove of Monoliths had a correspondingly enormous hoard of magic treasures of inestimable value.

Alas, no one dared to go and try to take the treasure from them. Even supreme World Gods only stood a fairly small chance of surviving that place. Who would dare to risk their lives in such a rash way?

"It seems I'll have to wait for my own breakthrough to the World level. Perhaps then I'll have a chance," Ning mused. He was already comparable to a master-class World God; after he actually broke through to the World level, he would definitely become much more powerful than before.

As for exactly how much more powerful he could become, even Ning himself wasn't sure. This was because the main reason he was so powerful was because of the azureflower region inside of him. It was currently of tremendous help to him, but would it continue to be effective after he reached the World level? There was no way for Ning to find out in advance.

"Let's leave," Ning said.

"Leave?" Su Youji looked at Ning.

"Yes. We have no choice but to give up for now!" Ning turned his head to give the distant Grove of Monoliths a final look. "The Grove of Monoliths isn't a place which I can challenge. Not now, at least. Let's go

explore some other areas. Perhaps, after a period of time passes, that bugbeast will voluntarily depart from the Grove."

Voluntarily leave the Grove? Even Ning himself knew that he was just daydreaming. The graymist creature had nearly lost its life. It probably would stay hidden within the Grove for a long period of time before leaving. It wouldn't be surprising if it stayed there for at least a million years!

"Right, right. Maybe it'll come out later," Su Youji said supportively.

Time flowed on.

In the blink of an eye, more than five months had passed since the two had slain Foxblaze and Foxbold.

Within the core region of the Allgod Estate, the Castrum Divinitus itself. Whooooooooosh.

The towering estate was an utterly dazzling sight to behold, emanating an aura of light that seemingly stretched off into infinity. Although the Allgod Estate took up nearly half of this entire chaosworld, the Castrum Divinitus itself was so high that it could be seen from the very ends of the world.

This was an utterly enormous castle that spanned trillions of kilometers! This was a place which spelled doom for even Samsara Daolords! A place none dared to enter rashly!

"We're just one step away. Just one step."

In front of the towering castle was an enormous plaza, and before the plaza were a flight of stairs. However, there were 108,000 steps to this flight of stairs.

Two squads of cultivators were advancing up the stairs. One squad had four World-level experts and was led by a small, skinny, blood-robed youth. This skinny youth had blood-red eyebrows, and his eyes seemed like a deep, bottomless sea of blood. Anyone who looked at him would be seized by uncontrollable fear.

The blood-robed youth walked at the head of his squad, and behind him were three World Gods with auras of tremendous power. These three World Gods all treated the youth with tremendous respect.

“Fukai! Ahahaha. You brought ten World-level servants in, but only two of them remain.” The blood-robed youth let out an ear-piercing laugh. “I think you should just surrender and commit suicide.”

“Surrender? To you?” The leader of the other squad was a golden-robed youth, and behind him were two World-level experts of tremendous power.

The golden-robed youth laughed coldly as he cast the other youth a sidelong glance. “Arroyo, you brought in ten as well but you only have three left. You aren’t that much better off.”

“I still have one more than you. One more servant means my chances are better,” the blood-robed youth snickered. His bloodsea eyes were overflowing with a desire to kill, and he didn’t disguise his intent at all as he glared at the golden-robed youth.

These two squads advanced simultaneously up the stairs, neither squad pausing to rest.

Soon, they finished the 108,000 steps and reached the very top of the stairs, arriving at the great plaza.

Both squads raised their heads to stare at the enormous castle before them, a castle so great that they could barely see the top of it clearly.

# Chapter 32: Bringing Disaster Unto Others

The towering castle was utterly, endlessly enormous.

The two squads held a total of seven World-level experts, and they were like ants crawling atop the surface of that utterly enormous plaza. The leaders of the two squads, that blood-robed youth and that gold-robed youth, both raised their heads to stare at the titanic gates to the towering castle.

The front gates to the Castrum Divinitus was just as vast and towering as the castle itself.

Even though they were World Gods, they could just barely make out the outlines of the great castle. The edges to the castle were so far away that they appeared quite blurry to these World Gods. This was a testament to how truly vast this castle was.

“Daolord Allgod truly was a cultivator who was comparable to Eternal Emperors.” A blazing look was in the eyes of the blood-robed youth. “Sooner or later, I’ll become just as powerful as Daolord Allgod was. My name will spread throughout the Endless Territories, just as his did. Countless cultivators will tremble in fear when they hear my name. Ahahaha...”

“Are you still daydreaming? Time to wake up.” The golden-robed youth in the other squad smirked.

“Hmph. You’ll be nothing more than a stepping stone to me.” The blood-robed youth glanced sideways at the golden-robed youth.

“Based on what I can sense from the workings of fate... you’ll die here while I will survive.” The golden-robed youth’s voice held a strange cadence to it as he spoke.

“You fool.” The blood-robed youth laughed coldly.

As they were chatting with each other, drops of liquid suddenly began to manifest atop the vast plaza. The drops of liquid were covered in flames, and they slowly began to draw together into a fiery figure. The flames

began to die away, revealing the figure's form. This was a bald, muscular man who had three eyes, the third eye in the middle of his forehead glowing with golden light.

"The Goldeye Golem." The golden-robed youth and the blood-robed youth blanched, hurriedly suppressing their auras and beginning to act in a much more humble manner.

The Goldeye Golem was Daolord Allgod's greatest creation and the most perfect manifestation of his Dao of Constructs.

Daolord Allgod was an expert in both artificing and in golem-making. The Goldeye Golem was the most powerful golem he had ever created, and Daolord Allgod had infused it with certain restrictive spells that ensured that there was no way any other cultivators would ever be able to take control over it. In other words...the Goldeye Golem possessed freedom!

It possessed tremendous power and was comparable to a Daolord who had reached the verge of the Daomerge! The Allgod Estate was under its control, as was the many formations and protective spells inside of it. Even Samsara Daolords who were themselves at the Verge would definitely die if they tried to force their way through the estate... and this Goldeye Golem was just one of the many defensive mechanisms which Daolord Allgod had left behind in this place.

This was a golem that could not be bound. It would forever stay within the Allgod Estate, serving as its eternal guardian! This was the First Guardian and Commander of the Castrum Divinitus, the core of the Allgod Estate.

"It has been a long, long time since a cultivator has come to the Castrum Divinitus." The bald, three-eyed man stared coldly at the two squads. "You were able to overcome many dangers and make your way to the castle. Very well done."

The Allgod Estate was divided into three regions.

The outer region was the Ten Thousand Mountains. The inner region was the Fog Sea. The core region was the Castrum Divinitus.

Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals generally stayed in the Ten Thousand Mountains, as 90% of them would perish if they dared to enter the Fog Sea.

World-level experts generally stayed in the Fog Sea. Although some of them would die, they still stood a decent chance of survival. However, if they dared to travel on to the Castrum Divinitus it was almost guaranteed that they would perish.

As for Daolords?

Daolords did not dare to enter this place at all.

“There were originally twenty-two of you. For seven of you to survive and make it to this place means that you are fairly strong for World-level experts,” the three-eyed man evaluated.

Generally speaking, only one out of ten World-level cultivators would be able to survive a journey to the Castrum Divinitus. Thus, people like Ning or World God Dragonbinder wouldn’t even think about trying to travel all the way to the core region. Such an attempt would be sheer suicide.

“Tell me. What do you desire?” The bald three-eyed man asked.

The gazes of the two squad leaders lit up. The blood-robed youth and the gold-robed youth had both risked their lives in order to acquire the same treasure!

“The divine blood of the Eternal!”

“The divine blood of the Eternal!”

The two simultaneously said the exact same thing.

“The divine blood of the Eternal?” The bald three-eyed man frowned. It was clearly just a golem, but it behaved just as an actual living being might. Previously, there was a look of kindness in his gaze. Now, his words and his bearing had turned markedly colder. “If you have come here for the divine blood of the Eternal, you should know exactly where that blood came from! My master spent endless years chasing after Eternal Emperor Melobo. After dealing him a grievous injury, my master was able to steal

away a portion of his divine blood. After refining it down to its purest essence, Master was able to produce just a single drop of purified divine blood!"

"That drop of Eternal blood is utterly priceless. It is one of the top ten treasures of the Allgod Estate!" The bald three-eyed man swept the seven cultivators with his gaze. "But since you have made it past all the dangerous obstacles in your way... per Master's orders, you are qualified to be given one chance to acquire one of his legacy's."

"However, the more valuable the legacy, the more difficult the trial." The three-eyed man continued, "I urge you to give up and instead choose an Eternal weapon, a precious elixir, or even a hundred bugbeasts servants. Those trials are all much easier."

"I only wish for the Eternal blood," the blood-robed youth said.

"The only thing I desire is the Eternal blood," the gold-robed youth agreed.

"Oh?" The three-eyed man was rather irritated, but he couldn't go against the orders which his master had set down.

"Very well then." The three-eyed man's voice was now ice-cold, and it grated against the ears of the seven cultivators. "All seven of you desire the divine blood of the Eternal?"

"Yes."

"Yes."

"Yes"

The other five World-level experts all spoke out as well.

"You have made your request, and your request is for the Eternal blood of Melobo!" The three-eyed man nodded. "Very well then. You shall be given the most difficult trial...the Twin Samsara Heavens!"

"Good." The gold-robed youth and the blood-robed youth both had blazing, eager looks in their eyes.

Anyone who reached the front gates of the Castrum Divinitus could

make a request of the Goldeye Golem. Daolord Allgod was quite benevolent towards weaker cultivators. He slew any and all Daolords who attempted to enter his estate, but any World-level experts who made it to the front gates usually would not leave empty-handed!

“You’ve already experienced many life-threatening dangers in your quest to reach this place. If you asked for any other treasures, even if you failed your trials you wouldn’t be at risk of losing your lives,” the three-eyed man said. “However, the trial of the Twin Samsara Heavens is the most difficult trial possible. Many of you will die, and it is possible that all seven of you will fail to acquire the Eternal blood. By then, it will be too late to feel regret.”

“We won’t feel regret.”

“No regrets.”

The blood-robed youth and the gold-robed youth both spoke out in unison. In their hearts, they were actually beginning to curse at the golem.

Cut the crap, alright? Hurry up and start!

“Very well.” The three-eyed man nodded. “The trial of the Twin Samsara Heavens requires a total of ten World-level experts. Only seven of you are present. Therefore...I will teleport three additional World-level experts from various places throughout the Allgod Estate. They, too, shall take part in the Twin Samsara Heavens alongside the seven of you. They too shall have a chance to acquire the Eternal blood.

The faces of both the blood-robed youth and the gold-robed youth tightened... but then they smiled coldly.

“Would those ants even dare to compete against us?”

“If they come, they die.”

Both felt quite confident in their abilities.

“Mm...” The three-eyed man nodded slowly. “I can sense four other World-level experts within the Allgod Estate right now. I’ll teleport the three closest ones here.”

.....

"Hmph. You wanted to resist me?" World God Dragonbinder was seated atop a boulder, a somewhat excited look in his eyes as he stared at a flying needle which he had just recently acquired.

Rumble...

Suddenly, space around him began to twist and distort.

"How can this-..." Dragonbinder's face twisted. He had never heard of something like this happening before, of a person tripping a formation despite sitting there and not even moving. Space around him formed into a spatial whirlpool which quickly drew Dragonbinder into its folds.

Swoosh.

World God Dragonbinder disappeared without a trace.

.....

"Perhaps I'll have a chance of succeeding once I become a master-class World-level expert." A green-haired man dressed in long pink robes and whose narrow eyes were filled with foxlike cunning was staring at a palace in front of him. He had two females behind him, both Ancestral Immortals.

"Yes, I have to reach the level of full mastery first. If I still fail, then I'll simply accept my death within this Fog Sea." A look of resolve was in the pink-robed man's eyes.

Rumble...

Space twisted around him as well as that spatial vortex appeared.

"What's going on?" The pink-robed man was astonished. He had spent more than a thousand years in the Fog Sea but had never encountered a situation like this.

"Master!" His two maids were shocked as well.

The whirlpool of twisted space completely enveloped him as well as both of his maids.

Swoosh.

All three of them disappeared without a trace.

.....

"Youji, you need to spend some time thinking about how to infuse your insights regarding the Dao of Fire into your combat tactics." Ning was by Su Youji's side, watching as she filled the air around her with countless curved scimitars. These were the treasures left behind by Chaos Immortal Foxbold, and they actually a very good fit for the Flamefairy.

But of course, Ning would help Su Youji acquire even better weapons after they left the Allgod Estate.

"Alright." Su Youji nodded.

Rumble...

Spatial ripples began to appear in the surrounding area.

"What's going on?!" Ning and the Flamefairy were both shocked. The spatial ripples twisted into a vortex which quickly encompassed the two of them, giving them no chance to hide or to dodge.

Swoosh.

Both Ning and the Flamefairy disappeared as well.

.....

The blood-robed youth, the gold-robed youth, and the five World-level retainers were all standing before the great plaza. As for the three-eyed man, he stood at the very front of them.

At this moment, a series of spatial ripples began to appear next to him.

Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh.

A series of figures began to appear from within the spatial ripples. The three groups consisted of the pink-robed man and his two maids, World God Dragonbinder, and Ji Ning and Su Youji.

"Even Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals were roped in?" The blood-robed youth laughed. "Why'd you even bring them? My servants are all

World-level experts.”

“For them to come means death.” The gold-robed youth laughed coldly.

Although the two wanted nothing more than to kill each other, that was because they viewed each other as dangerous opponents. As for other World-level experts? They truly held very little respect for the vast majority of them.

“What’s going on?”

“Why are we here?”

The cultivators who had just been forcibly dragged to this place all stared around in a bewildered fashion.

“Senior apprentice-brother Dragonbinder.” When Ning saw Dragonbinder, he couldn’t help but call out to him mentally.

“Brother Ji Ning. Flamefairy.” When World God Dragonbinder saw Ning and Su Youji appear, he was also delighted and hurriedly messaged both of them. They could all sense that something strange was happening and so confined their conversation to the mental realm.

“Hmph. All of you were quite lucky. The seven of us risked our lives and nearly died to make it to this place, but you were lucky enough to be teleported straight here.” The blood-robed youth laughed coldly.

“Wrong. They aren’t lucky. They are unlucky as all hell... because they are going to die very soon,” the gold-robed youth said calmly.

# Chapter 33: The Samsara Grinders

Ji Ning, Flamefairy Su Youji, World God Dragonbinder, and the rest of the cultivators who had been teleported here glanced cautiously at their new surroundings. They heard the words of both the blood-robed youth and the gold-robed youth, and it led them to come to a certain conclusion. This conclusion was simply so inconceivable that it caused all of them to feel shock and awe in their hearts!

“Are we standing before the Castrum Divinitus?” Ning raised his head to stare at the infinitely vast castle before him. “According to the information I purchased, one has to experience countless dangers in order to make it to the doorstep of the Castrum Divinitus, the coremost region of the entire Allgod Estate. It is said that death is virtually assured for anyone who tries to make this journey! Can it be that these seven World Gods have all successfully made it here?”

Seven had survived the journey through the Allgod Estate to this place. How many had originally been in those two squads? According to the accepted odds of only one in ten surviving, could it be that dozens of them had made the attempt? Were there really this many suicidal World Gods in the world?

“Welcome, our three newcomers.” The three-eyed man’s voice rang out as he glanced at the three new World-level experts. Everyone on the plaza fell silent.

“I forcibly teleported all of you here, and I imagine you are rather confused,” the three-eyed man said. “Although being teleported here can be described as a devastating disaster, it can also be described as a tremendous opportunity.”

Ning and the others all looked at the bald three-eyed man. The three-eyed man, simply standing there, radiated a faint aura of absolute transcendent power. Although he was clearly suppressing his aura, Ning and the others could all tell that this man could probably wipe them all out with a single gentle breath! And indeed, their senses were accurate.

This three-eyed man, the Goldeye Golem, was the First Guardian of the Castrum Divinitus. He was every bit as powerful as Daolord Solesky was.

“The three of you, and the seven of you!” The three-eyed man pointed towards the cultivators on both sides, and all of them listened obediently.

“You must take part in the trial of the Twin Samsara Heavens,” the three-eyed man said.

“Senior.” World God Dragonbinder couldn’t help but speak out. “Why must we experience this trial? Must we take part in it? Also... you spoke of a ‘tremendous opportunity’. What are you speaking of?”

“You must take part,” the three-eyed man replied calmly.

Dragonbinder couldn’t help but sigh to himself.

He wasn’t a fool. He could tell that this Twin Samsara Heavens trial had to be an incredibly dangerous one. Even though he was a disciple of the Badlands Court, he had never even heard of the Castrum Divinitus forcibly teleporting World-level experts to this location to take part in any trials. In addition, the other group of seven World Gods gave him a sense of enormous danger!

Clearly, either of the two squads in that group could effortlessly kill him.

He didn’t want this ‘tremendous opportunity’. All he wanted to do was get out of here! But alas, there was no way out.

“The seven of them experienced countless dangers on their journey, and many of their comrades died on the way to this place.” The three-eyed man pointed towards the two squads as he explained to Ning and the others. “They were allowed to make certain requests of me, and if they requested bugbeasts, golems, high-level techniques, or other similar items they would’ve been given fairly simple trials.”

“However, they only desired one thing... the divine blood of the Eternal.”

“The divine blood of Eternal Emperor Melobo.” A dangerous tone could be heard in the three-eyed man’s voice.

Ning’s heart clenched when he heard this. Emperor Melobo?

Wasn't that the Eternal Emperor which Daolord Allgod had wished to kill for so many years?

"The divine blood of the Eternal is of inestimable value." The three-eyed man swept Ning and the others with his gaze. "Its value vastly surpasses the value of any items you are familiar with such as Pseudo Samsara Pills or Eternal weapons! It is one of the ten most valuable items in the entire Castrum Divinitus. As for its purposes... if one of you is able to obtain it, I'll tell you then."

The blood-robed youth had a look in his eyes that could only be described as 'berserk'.

Although the gold-robed youth was more sedate, one could also see the flames of excitement burning deep within his icy cold gaze.

"Blood of the Eternal? What's that?" World God Dragonbinder and the pink-robed man were both quite puzzled. They had never even heard of such a thing.

"Hmph. You fools."

"You know nothing."

The blood-robed youth and the gold-robed youth exchanged a glance, completely disdainful of the newcomers who had just appeared.

The three-eyed man waved his hand. Suddenly, an enormous black and white millstone and grindstone appeared the air above the great plaza. The two giant stones were a hundred kilometers in size, and they slowly descended downwards before alighting on the plaza.

"This is the Samsara Grinders." The three-eyed man pointed at the enormous grinder. "I will split the ten of you into five pairs! Each pair will take turns battling atop the Samsara Grinders, and your opponents shall be the many warriors who will appear and attack you."

"In short, you will only achieve victory when your opponent and any forces he controls all perish!"

"If both you and your opponent perish at the same time, you can only

blame your own poor luck.” The three-eyed man continued, “As for the surviving cultivators, they will each be blessed with a small bit of fortune. The cultivator whose performance was the best will have a chance of acquiring the divine blood of the Eternal.”

“A chance?” The blood-robed youth and the gold-robed youth both spoke out at the same time.

“If you wish to acquire the Eternal blood, then do your best to kill. Kill the warriors on the Samsara Grinders and kill your foe! The more you kill, the more power you reveal, the greater the chances that you will acquire the Eternal blood.” The three-eyed man said calmly, “You have to at least meet my minimum expectations. Otherwise, none of you should even think about acquiring the Eternal blood.”

The breaths of the two youths turned ragged. They had paid an enormous price to get here! But alas, they had no other options.

“The first pair.”

The bald three-eyed man swept his gaze across the ten World-level experts. He first pointed towards the World God standing behind the blood-robed youth. This World God actually had bone armor growing out of his upper back and protecting his chest. Spikes grew out from his elbows and knees, and his face was covered with a mask of bone which covered everything but his eyes and his mouth.

The three-eyed man pointed at the World God and said, “You!”

“And... you!” The three-eyed man then pointed towards the pink-robed man.

“Master.” World God Boneplate looked at the blood-robed youth respectfully.

“Just kill him as fast as you can,” the blood-robed youth instructed.

“Yes,” World God Boneplate said respectfully.

The pink-robed man frowned as he carefully scrutinized his opponent in the Samsara Grinders. “Not good. I’ve never even seen this man before. He

probably isn't a World God of the Badlands Territory. I sense tremendous danger from this man! Still, since he's willing to be the blood-robed youth's servant, he probably shouldn't be too powerful."

The pink-robed man murmured softly to himself, "Looks like I'll have to go all out."

"The two of you, listen up! Each of you will only be permitted to use nine Elder Gods or Ancestral Immortals at most! You can at most use a total of nine bugbeasts! You are also limited to no more than nine golems! Furthermore, none of your World-level servants are permitted to take part!" The three-eyed man finished his instructions, then gave the final commands. "Now, go up onto the Samsara Grinders. Once I give the order, you can begin your attacks."

"Yes," World God Boneplate said.

"Shit. I can't use my thousand-man Elder God Formation!" The pink-robed man's face turned pale. That formation was one of his killer trump cards.

Whoosh. Whoosh.

World God Boneplate and the pink-robed man both flew atop the enormous black-white bedstone, rapidly shrinking to become ant-sized as they landed.

"The Samsara Grinders contains a dimension of its own," World God Dragonbinder sent mentally.

"Agreed." Ning nodded.

The black-white bedstone and millstone were both covered with countless marvelous runes and patterns.

World God Boneplate stood there, staring at his distant foe. He said aloud, "Chaos Immortal Flygrace. I recognize you. You have the power of an elite World-level expert." His voice boomed with power and strength.

"But I've never heard of you before," the pink-robed Chaos Immortal Flygrace replied.

Rumble...

The enormous Samsara Grinders began to tremble as the countless runes covering its surface began to emit light. The light quickly began to swirl together and condense into human-shaped warriors dressed in golden armor. There had to be thousands of those golden warriors, and every single one of them had the aura of a World-level expert.

“What?! How can there be this many golden warriors?” Everyone watching this was shocked, including the two combatants on the Samsara Grinders as well as everyone watching from below. Their faces all turned pale!

The auras generated by these golden warriors indicated that all of them had reached the World level of power. Even if they were merely at the threshold, there were thousands of them! This was utterly terrifying.

“Begin, then.” The three-eyed man gave the order.

“Kill!”

“Kill!”

The thousands of golden warriors transformed into streaks of light, moving at the speed of light as they charged towards the pink-robed man and World God Boneplate.

# Chapter 34: The Silkmaid Race

“Not good.” The pink-robed Chaos Immortal Flygrace had an ugly look on his face. He immediately willed the area around him to become filled with silvery-white shuttles. After they appeared, he furiously poured all of his Immortal energy into them, unleashing the power of the seals hidden within this set of Dao weapons. Instantly, the nine silvery-white shuttles began to transform and blur, first dividing into a total of eighty-one shuttles, then dividing into 729 shuttles, then...

Soon, more than ten thousand flying shuttles had appeared in the area around Chaos Immortal Flygrace, and they clustered around him in a dense array.

“Kill!”

“Kill him!”

The golden warriors bellowed with rage. Some of them wielded warblades, some wielded spears, some wielded gourds, some wielded ropes, and some wielded whips. They all surged forward en masse as they wildly charged towards their foes.

Boom! Boom! Boom! These golden warriors quickly entered into combat against Chaos Immortal Flygrace. The thousands of flying shuttles around him all transformed into streaks of light as they furiously plunged down upon the gold-armored warriors. Due to the limitations of space, only a hundred golden warriors could attack him at the same time. Thus, there were over a hundred shuttles striking against every single golden warrior.

Massive explosions could be heard ringing out nonstop.

The golden warriors had no fear of death and continued to charge forwards fearlessly. Some died due to their injuries, but more of their fellows would charge forward to take their spots. The runes of the Samsara Grinders committed to emit that dazzling light, causing a steady stream of golden warriors to continue to be born. Slowly, the total number of golden warriors atop the Samsara Grinders began to increase.

"Not good. I'm already using my most powerful area attack technique, and I'm using up my Immortal energy at an incredible rate. Despite that, I'm just barely able to hold on." Chaos Immortal Flygrace was quickly forced into shrinking his defensive perimeter.

"Kill!"

"Charge!"

The golden warriors charged forward in an endless flood, fearing neither injury nor death. Quite a few of the silvery-white shuttles actually vanished, as there were only nine real ones to begin with. The rest were all condensed out of Immortal energy.

"Not good. I can't hang on for much longer." Chaos Immortal Flygrace spared a moment to glance at his distant opponent, wanting to see how his opponent was fairing. The distant World God Boneplate was slaughtering all of the golden warriors around him with incomparable valor. More and more golden warriors had appeared around him as well, and they had started to use teamwork, with some using ropes to slow him down and others using spears to strike at him from afar. World God Boneplate was starting to look a bit haggard, and yet he was still able to hold his own.

"A master-class World God?" Chaos Immortal Flygrace's face changed. When he saw World God Boneplate continue to dispatch the golden warriors with comparative ease, Chaos Immortal Flygrace immediately understood just how powerful his foe was. In addition, his foe had clearly slain more of the golden warriors than he had.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

More and more of the shuttles surrounding Chaos Immortal Flygrace began to disappear before reforming. His defensive perimeter was continuing to shrink as the golden warriors began to grow increasingly frenzied in their attacks. Many of them were starting to strike from afar by hurling their spears, putting even more pressure on Chaos Immortal Flygrace.

"N-no... am I going to just die here?"

“How can it end like this?”

“I have to make it back. I paid such an enormous price and abandoned all my pride. I slew my only friend in order to be able to acquire this Lesser Thousand Elder Gods Formation. I was going to go back once I reached the level of full mastery! How can I die here...”

“N-no...”

Boom! Boom!

The golden warriors were now able to move to within thirty meters of him, and more and more of them were surging in his direction. A short while later, Chaos Immortal Flygrace was completely smashed apart and slain by the golden warriors.

Ji Ning, World God Dragonbinder, and Su Youji watched all this happen from afar. Rather unpleasant looks could be seen on their faces.

“Chaos Immortal Flygrace had quite a good reputation, actually.” World God Dragonbinder sighed. “Him and Chaos Immortal Winterbowl were good friends and known as the ‘Two Immortals Who Fly in Winter’. Chaos Immortal Winterbowl died just a short while ago, and now Chaos Immortal Flygrace has died as well. Alas.”

“This Samsara Grinders truly is dangerous.” Su Youji was quite nervous. “Those golden warriors don’t look that tough, but there are simply far too many of them.”

“That World God covered in bony armor is able to slay a warrior with each strike of his palms. I can sense that these warriors have merely reached the threshold of the World level of power.” Ning nodded. “The problem is that there are too many of them, and they are completely fearless.”

Fighting enemies who had no fear of death at all was a completely different experience from fighting normal enemies.

“They have poor techniques. In fact, you can say that they have no techniques at all.” World God Dragonbinder nodded. “However, they are extremely strong. See that? When dozens of them toss their spears at the

same time, even that bone-armored World God is suffering some injuries when he blocks them head on.”

“Although this Samsara Grinders supposedly is meant for the two combatants to duel each other, there’s actually no point to it. The gold-armored warriors alone are enough of a challenge!” Ning slowly shook his head.

“Right. Most likely, only someone with the power of a supreme World God would be capable of bursting past the encirclement of the golden warriors,” World God Dragonbinder agreed.

Although there were many golden warriors on the battlefield, only so many could attack you at any given moment in time. Thankfully, they didn’t have any combination formations to use either. Thus, if you were strong enough you might stand a chance of bursting past their many attacks.

“Unfortunately, none of us have that level of power.” World God Dragonbinder shook his head as he looked at Ning and Su Youji. “Youji, you just made your breakthrough a short while ago. You are too weak. It will be very dangerous for you once it is your turn to enter the Grinder.”

As he saw it, Ji Ning was merely an Elder God while Su Youji was just a newly ascended Chaos Immortal. The two of them were far too weak. Even an elite World-level expert like Chaos Immortal Flygrace had been overwhelmed and mobbed by those many golden warriors. How could Ji Ning and Su Youji possibly survive? World God Dragonbinder was very worried about them.

Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh.

After Chaos Immortal Flygrace let out a final despairing cry, all of the golden warriors atop the enormous Samsara Grinders came to a halt. Moments later, their bodies began to break apart and dissipate into light.

Soon, the only one remaining was World God Boneplate.

“The first of the five matches has ended.” The three-eyed man waved his hand spoke out in a frosty voice. His fiery hand dramatically increased in

size, seized World God Boneplate by the shoulder, then roughly tossed him towards the direction of the blood-robed youth. “Since it’s over, why the hell are you still taking up space on the Grinder?”

A hint of rage was in World God Boneplate’s eyes, but he quickly suppressed it and instead returned obediently to the blood-robed youth’s side.

“Not bad.” The blood-robed youth glanced sideways at his slave.

“Thank you, Master.” World God Boneplate revealed a look of joy.

“The second match...”

The three-eyed man swept the remaining combatants with his gaze, then pointed towards a World God standing behind the gold-robed youth. This was a hideously ugly old hag who had sharp, claw-like fingers. A dull red light could be seen flickering deep within her eyes, and she emanated an aura of extreme weirdness.

“You.” The bald three-eyed man pointed towards the ugly old hag as he spoke.

“And... you!” The three-eyed man pointed towards World God Dragonbinder.

“You already know the rules. Up you go!” The three-eyed man ordered.

The ugly old hag gave World God Dragonbinder a rather serious look. The gold-robed youth by her side instructed, “Be careful. This is World God Dragonbinder, a disciple of the Badlands Court. He definitely is far more powerful than that Chaos Immortal Flygrace was. Don’t embarrass me!”

“Don’t worry, master.” The ugly old hag nodded then immediately flew towards the enormous Samsara Grinders.

“Be careful, senior apprentice-brother Dragonbinder,” Ning said.

“Big brother Dragonbinder, I don’t recognize any of these cultivators. They must be from other territories, and I can sense that they came with ill intentions. That master-class World God who fought just now was

merely a servant; this one is probably a master-class World-level expert as well,” Su Youji said with worry.

“Mm...” World God Dragonbinder nodded slowly.

He knew that a critical moment had arrived.

Swoosh!

World God Dragonbinder flew towards the Samsara Grinders.

World God Dragonbinder and the hideous old hag stared at each other from afar from their positions at the opposite ends of the Samsara Grinders. The runes covering the enormous Grinder began to radiate light that quickly coalesced into those golden warriors.

“World God Dragonbinder. I’ve heard of your prowess and your might... but today, you shall die by my hands. Listen up! You can call me ‘Silkwater’. Don’t die without even knowing who you died to!” The ugly old hag began to grow in size as she spoke, her lower body transforming into the body of a giant scorpion. As for her upper body, it transformed into the form of a nude woman of surpassing charm whose face was every bit as beautiful as Su Youji’s.

Upon seeing this, World God Dragonbinder’s face tightened. “A Silkmaid?”

“A Silkmaid?” Ning’s face tightened as well. Before leaving, Daolord Solesky had given him information regarding many of the mysteries and secrets of the various territories around them. One bit of information pertained to a race known as ‘Silkmaids’.

“Who the hell are these people? How is it that they have master-class World Gods and Silkmaid experts serving as their slaves?” Ning turned to stare at the distant gold-robed youth and blood-robed youth.

“Don’t die, senior apprentice-brother Dragonbinder. You have to stay alive.” Ning wasn’t even thinking about his own safety right now. All of his attention was focused on World God Dragonbinder.

# Chapter 35: Seals

The endless primordial chaos was filled with endless mysteries. Even the exalted Eternal Emperors, figures who would exist for all eternity for and whose every word carried the force of law, would never dare to claim that they understood all of its secrets. The primordial chaos held certain special types of lifeforms, one of which Ji Ning had encountered in the Three Realms. Back then, Ning had encountered the Waterian servant of the Elder God known as Godfiend Witherspike. Although Waterians were considered alien Outsiders to the Three Realms, they were actually quite common in the Endless Territories and not worthy of special mention.

The Silkmaid race, however, was different. They were much rarer and much more mysterious.

They existed only in small numbers, and all of them were female. They had to copulate with males belonging to other species in order to give birth to new Silkmaids, and their children would always be female! Despite being few in number, they were extoradinally powerful because they were born with tremendous innate skill in illusions and also were very skilled in close combat. A Silkmaid who reached the World level would be an absolute nightmare for other World-level experts to face, because anyone trapped in one of their illusions would find themselves easy prey for the Silkmaids in close combat.

“Let us begin,” the three-eyed man ordered.

Thousands of golden warriors once more began to manifest atop the Samsara Grinders. With a loud howl, the golden warriors all transformed into streaks of light as they threw themselves towards World God Dragonbinder and World Goddess Silkwater.

Whoosh.

Two azure golems suddenly appeared next to World God Dragonbinder.

“Master.” The two azure golems took up defensive positions around him.

“Block any foes who attempt to attack me. Don’t let them get too close,”

World God Dragonbinder sent mentally to them. At the same time, he took out a Dao-seal that looked like a dried yellow leaf. The seal was covered in many wriggly divine runes and emanated an aura of mystery and power.

“Time to go all out.” World God Dragonbinder felt a tinge of heartache. This was a treasure which he had saved to keep himself alive in a desperate situation. However, upon learning that his opponent was a Silkmaid and upon seeing all those golden warriors charge towards him, he could no longer afford to be stingy with his treasures. Staying alive was what mattered the most.

Rumble...

As World God Dragonbinder poured his Immortal energy into the Dao-seal, the dried leaf-like seal instantly disintegrated into countless divine runes. These runes intersected with each other like countless thin strands of silk, forming a golden set of armor over Dragonbinder’s body.

“SHKREE!!!”

The half-scorpion, half-female World God Silkwater let out an ear-piercing shriek. The sound instantly drove its way into the ears of the distant World God Dragonbinder, the strange cadence delving deep into his mind and causing him to instantly lose his mental connection to the outside world.

He realized that he had suddenly been transformed into an ordinary mortal. He was in the middle of a lake, and there were many beautiful women dressed in just swathes of gauze who were slowly moving closer and closer to him.

“Illusions? BREAK!!!”

Although he seemed like he was just an ordinary mortal, his suddenly explosive roar was filled with his heartforce and the power of his mighty will. The roar caused the illusory world to instantly break apart and quickly dissipate.

World God Dragonbinder regained his faculties.

A large number of golden warriors had drawn close to him and were charging straight towards him. The two golems he had were doing their best to defend, but there were simply too many of them. By now, two of them had already reached Dragonbinder himself and were in the process of launching an attack against him. However, the golden leather armor covering his body just rippled slightly, easily defending against this attack.

“Die.” World God Dragonbinder stabbed out with his claw-like hands, piercing directly through the heads of those two golden warriors. Boom! Boom! Both golden warriors died instantaneously.

“What a powerful illusion. It managed to trap even me within its world for a period of time.” World God Dragonbinder was shocked. My heartforce has reached the fourth stage, and I have a secret art which Master taught me, yet I was still unable to defend against it.”

Although he had almost instantly defeated the technique, battles between World-level experts could start and finish in a single instant. That brief moment when he had been trapped by the illusion was quite possibly enough to spell doom in battle. However, weaker illusions wouldn’t have been able to drag him into that illusory world, thanks to his powerful heartforce and his soul technique.

“Die!”

“World God Dragonbinder, die!” The Silkmaid battling against the other golden warriors off in the distance let out repeated screeches, each screech causing Dragonbinder a certain amount of trouble. He’d often come to a halt mid-strike, giving those golden warriors a chance to land attacks against him.

Although his two golems stayed close to him and defended him in close combat, it was impossible for them to prevent every single golden warrior from reaching him.

“The disciples of Daolord Badlands truly are difficult to deal with.” The gold-robed youth’s face tightened slightly. “So he actually had a seal of such tremendous power?”

“Fukai, aren’t you supposed to be very talented in the art of Dao-seals?

The Dao-seal which World God Dragonbinder used just now was pretty powerful, right? When those golden warriors manage to land attacks against him, the Dao-talisman seems to almost completely nullify and ignore those attacks.” The blood-robed youth snickered. “It seems your Silkmaid is about to lose.”

“There’s a limit to how much power any Dao-seal can have. Once its power is used up, he’ll die.” The gold-robed youth ground his teeth. He had paid a staggering sum of money in order to purchase this World Goddess of the Silkmaid race to be his slave. The thing was, she hadn’t actually reached the level of full mastery as a World Goddess. Even so, thanks to her innate talents and some special abilities even actual master-class World Gods found it difficult to fight against her. The gold-robed youth had done everything he could to help her grow and to help strengthen her, but his quest to find the Eternal blood was simply too important. He was willing to risk even his own life to succeed in this question. Naturally, he had brought his Silkmaid to join him.

“I didn’t expect him to actually have such a powerful Dao-seal. Thus far, more than twenty golden warriors have landed attacks against him, but the power of the Dao-seal hasn’t even begun to dim.” The gold-robed youth secretly began to worry. “This Dao-seal has to be worth more than two hundred cubes of chaos nectar, and it can only be used a single time. I’m amazed he was willing to spend that much money.”

As for Ji Ning, he let out a sigh of relief. “So senior apprentice-brother Dragonbinder actually had such a powerful Dao-seal on him. He’s safe now. Still...I’m amazed he was willing to spend that much money on it.”

Dao-seals were very powerful, but the problem was that they were single-use items! Then again, their advantage lay in the fact that they generally didn’t have strict usage requirements. All you needed to do was to fill the seal with your Immortal energy and its power would be fully unleashed.

The power of this Dao-seal which Dragonbinder had just used was comparable to a Samsara Daolord’s defensive technique. Its energy was being depleted nonstop, and when the energy ran out the golden leather

armor would disappear, but prior to that happening Dragonbinder was in a position of absolute security.

“No. No! Damn...”

Although World Goddess Silkwater did her best to battle against her many foes, the golden warriors continued to swarm her without pause. She let out repeated screeches, causing World God Dragonbinder to be briefly trapped within that illusory world, but Dragonbinder had both the golems protecting him as well as the Dao-seal. By now, the golden leather armor over his body had dimmed just slightly.

Silkwater, however, was close to the end of her rope. These golden warriors attacking her weren’t actual living creatures, and as such they were able to completely ignore her illusions.

“Master.” World Goddess Silkwater cast a final glance to the gold-robed youth standing outside the Samsara Grinders, a look of apology and longing in her eyes.

Every single Silkmaid retainer was absolutely loyal to her master.

“Go, then. Go.” The gold-robed youth felt tremendous sorrow in his heart as well. Silkmaids were rarely used to fight on the front lines in such a manner. During the previous battles, World Goddess Silkwater had primarily been responsible for casting illusions from the back lines while the other World Gods attacked furiously from the front lines.

“If I can get the divine blood of the Eternal, all of this will have been worth it.”

“If I cannot... then the only thing awaiting me shall be death as well.” The gold-robed youth shut his eyes.

“Aaaaaah!” An ear-splitting scream rang out as World Goddess Silkwater cast her final illusion... and then she was completely tied up by the ropes of the golden warriors. A golden warrior holding a flask drew Silkwater into the flask, then ground her apart into dust. Just like that, World Goddess Silkwater died.

“The second match has concluded.” The bald three-eyed man’s voice

rang out once more. World God Dragonbinder quickly put away his two golems then hurriedly flew off of the Samsara Grinders. He was worried that if he moved too slowly, he would also be physically tossed off the stage just as the previous winner had been.

“Congratulations, big brother Dragonbinder,” Flamefairy Su Youji said.

Dragonbinder’s body was still covered with a suit of faintly glowing golden leather armor. He shook his head. “I was just lucky. That Silkmaid wasn’t that strong. If she had actually reached the level of full mastery as a World God, she would’ve been able to withstand the attacks of those golden warriors for an extremely long period of time. My Dao-seal would’ve been used up and I would’ve been not long for this world.”

Ning and Su Youji both nodded.

Ning couldn’t help but sigh. Silkmaids possessed terrifying powers of illusions. One had to have strong heartforce, a strong soul, and certain secret arts to be able to withstand their illusions. Ning was still at the fourth stage of heartforce and as such he was probably a bit too weak. Alas, upgrading heartforce was simply too difficult. There were many World-level experts who possessed only limited talent for heartforce, because heartforce was a completely different path of cultivation.

Cultivation was primarily divided amongst Ki Refiners, Fiendgod Body Refiners, and Heartforce Cultivators. Thus far, Ning had yet to encounter a single World-level expert who was a Heartforce Cultivator! One could imagine how rare they truly were.

“Master, how should we deal with them when it is our turn?” The Flamefairy was a bit worried.

# Chapter 36: Ji Ning Enters the Fray

“These two squads are too mysterious. Based on how they address each other, it would appear as though the blood-robed youth and the gold-robed youth are the leaders while the others are all servants or slaves! That bone-armored World God was a master-class World God while World Goddess Silkwater was of the ‘Silkmaid’ race, according to what big brother Dragonbinder said. Even big brother Dragonbinder was repeatedly drawn into her illusions. Given how powerful those two were, the rest can’t be weak either.” Su Youji sent worriedly, “And what worries me most is the possibility that we’ll encounter one of the leaders on the Samsara Grinders. They have to be even more dangerous.”

“Mm.” Ji Ning nodded.

Su Youji didn’t fully comprehend how valuable Silkmaids were, but Ning himself did. If the gold-robed youth truly had purchased a Silkmaid who was a World Goddess, he had to have a staggering amount of wealth! A Silkmaid World Goddess was worth more than a thousand cubes of chaos nectar.

But if the Silkmaid World Goddess had willingly chose to serve the gold-robed youth... that just made him even more terrifying.

“When it is our turn, follow the plan I set out earlier,” Ning sent. “Given our level of strength, we should be able to hold off those golden warriors.”

“Alright.” Su Youji nodded.

The bald three-eyed man swept the remaining contestants with his gaze, then said, “The third match will be... hm. You!” He pointed directly towards Su Youji.

“And... you!” He pointed at the skinny, viper-like man who was standing behind the blood-robed youth, a man who emanated an aura of insidious cold.

“Senior!” The blood-robed youth’s face tightened as he hurriedly said, “Senior, I feel as though your actions are unfair.”

"Yes. Senior, your actions truly are a bit unfair," the gold-robed youth agreed.

Both Ning and Su Youji were puzzled.

What was this all about?

"Unfair?" The three-eyed man looked at the two of them.

"We had to experience countless dangers in order to reach this place, and I imagine you know exactly how strong the seven of us are," the blood-robed youth said. "But the three World Gods you just chose were the three weakest ones under our command."

"Right." The gold-robed youth agreed. "Of the seven of us, World Goddess Silkwater could be considered the equivalent of a master-class World God, thanks to her illusory prowess. Thus, all three of them were roughly comparable to master-class World Gods. However, the rest of us are all supreme World Gods! You sent our three weakest followers to compete against the three newcomers. It is clear that you intend to have the four of us, the strongest four, to battle each other. This isn't really fair."

"You are acting in a rather prejudiced manner, senior." The blood-robed youth was rather irritated as well.

They had a total of seven cultivators split between their two teams. Three of them were roughly on par with master-class World Gods while the other four had the power of supreme World Gods. The First Guardian of the Castrum Divinitus had arranged for the three World-level experts he had forcibly teleported to this location to battle against the three weakest members of the original seven. Clearly, he was acting in a biased manner.

"Unfair?" The three-eyed man said coldly, "I forcibly teleported the three of them here and forced them to accept a potentially deadly trial. Do you think that was fair for them?"

"And her!" The three-eyed man pointed at Su Youji. "She broke through to become a Chaos Immortal just a few short months ago, right here in

the Allgod Estate. We're having a newly ascended Chaos Immortal compete against a master-class World God. You tell me, is that fair?"

The three-eyed man swept the gold-robed youth and the blood-robed youth with a cold gaze. "Or are you telling me that we should have her, a brand new Chaos Immortal, battle against one of you four supreme World Gods?"

The two instantly fell silent.

In truth, both of them knew exactly how strong Su Youji was. Before coming to the Badlands Territory, they had collected a significant amount of intelligence and information regarding all the World-level experts, Elder Gods, and Ancestral Immortals who lived in this territory. They had both long ago reviewed the information pertaining to Su Youji the Flamefairy. Although they weren't sure when she had made her breakthrough, it was definitely within the past thousand years.

"You don't even have the balls to compete against others on the same level of power as you, yet you dream of acquiring the divine blood of the Eternal?" The three-eyed man snorted, a hint of a mockery on his lips.

"Senior, please give us some guidance. What must we accomplish on the Samsara Grinders in order to acquire the Eternal blood?" The blood-robed youth, Arroyo, asked respectfully.

The gold-robed youth, Fukai, looked at the three-eyed man as well.

"Personally kill your opponent. Quickly." The three-eyed man said calmly, "Enough. Hurry up and get onto the Samsara Grinders."

"Hear that, Darkfall? She broke through to become a Chaos Immortal just a few months ago. Kill her as fast as you can," the blood-robed youth instructed.

"Understood," the tall, skinny, insidious man replied. Swish! He left behind a blur in the air as he moved to stand atop the Samsara Grinders.

"What incredible speed." The faces of both Ning and Su Youji tightened when they saw this. Their opponent was clearly so fast that not even Ning using the Thunderlight Wings was a match for him.

Swoosh. Swoosh.

Ning and Su Youji both flew up onto the Samsara Grinders. World God Dragonbinder wanted to stop Ning but he wasn't able to do so in time. His face turned pale and he felt misery in his heart. "Brother Ji Ning, why the hell did you go up there? It doesn't matter if the Elder Gods or Ancestral Immortals don't take part."

The divine runes covering the Samsara Grinders had already begun to glow with countless streams of light, resulting in the appearance of the golden warriors .

The tall, slender, insidious man stood far away from Ning and Youji. He was dressed in black robes, and he stared at them as he said in a cold voice, "Flamefairy Su Youji. I've heard of you, but I didn't expect for you to have broken through to become a Chaos Immortal. I urge you to put away that Elder God of yours. For him to take part in this competition is suicide. Oh. I forgot to tell you my name. I am World God Darkfall. Now, when you die, you'll at least know the name of the person who killed you."

World God Darkfall stood there, emanating an aura of absolute confidence. If he couldn't even kill a newly ascended Chaos Immortal, even he himself would feel that he was a joke.

"Master." Su Youji mentally messaged Ji Ning.

"Follow the plan," Ning instructed.

A master-class World God? This would be the toughest foe he had ever faced. Although he had encountered God Emperor Blacklotus who was even more powerful, Ning hadn't been the one to actually face him.

"Begin!"

The three-eyed man gave the order.

"Kill!"

"Kill!"

The countless golden warriors were driven into a frenzy as they transformed into streaks of light that shot towards the two sides.

“Come out.” Ning willed three golems to suddenly appear by his side. Two were black golems while the third was Rocky the stone titan. The Flamefairy also brought out her own black golem and took personal control of it upon entering it.

The three black golems formed a triangle that surrounded Ning and Rocky.

“She actually had four golems?” The blood-robed youth’s face tightened slightly when he saw this.

“She actually had four golems, Arroyo. It seems this won’t be as easy as you thought it would be.” The gold-robed youth spoke in quite a relaxed manner.

“Hmph. So what if she has four? Just watch and see.” The blood-robed youth was quite confident in the prowess of this subordinate, World God Darkfall.

Boom! Boom!

Golden warriors charged towards them in an endless tide, but the three black golems were like a dam that quelled their surge. As the two sides began to fight, quite a few of the golden warriors were knocked flying while some were actually shattered to pieces.

“Kill.”

“Kill.”

“Kill.”

Elder God Blacksun, Elder God Wilddog, and Su Youji each commanded a black golem. All three of them howled as bloodlust filled their veins, and they showed no mercy in their attacks whatsoever as they furiously blew apart all of the golden warriors charged towards them. These three black golems came as a set, and the formation linking them together was extremely suited for defense. The three of them were clearly far better at blocking out the enemy warriors than the two golems which World God Dragonbinder had used.

After battling for a brief moment in time, more than hundreds of golden warriors had been knocked away. Only two golden warriors managed to make it past their defensive perimeter, but Rocky was able to effortlessly crush both of them. Ning just stood there, not even needing to move.

“Hm?” Ning glanced at the situation on the other side of the battlefield. “It seems as though we need to give this World God Darkfall a bit of pressure.”

“Come out.”

Ning willed it, and a black gourd suddenly appeared before him in the air. The stopper to the gourd was open, allowing it to instantly release an enormous flood of lightning. Instantly, all five types of lightning began to furiously slam down towards the distant World God Darkfall.

“Shit.” World God Darkfall was wielding six different warblades as he furiously hacked at the golden warriors around him with abandon, causing many of them to fall. But once the five types of lightning began to slam into him, his face couldn’t help but tighten.

Although these five types of lightning weren’t capable of threatening his life, they were able to encumber down his movements and have an effect on his combat potential.

It must be understood that Ning was focusing all five types of lightning against him and him alone! Ning had spent a total of 180 cubes of chaos nectar in order to purchase the Pentabolt Gourd. Any weapon with such a hefty price tag would pose at least some degree of danger to most World-level experts.

“How can this be happening?!” World God Darkfall was clearly starting to struggle now.

He was feeling both angry and humiliated! He was a master-class World God, but he was mired into a dangerous situation while his opponent seemed to have an airtight defense.

“GRAAAAH!” World God Darkfall suddenly raised his head and let out a furious howl. Red lines appeared all across his face like tattoos as his aura

was dramatically strengthened.

“Die!”

World God Darkfall’s speed suddenly rose dramatically. He moved past the golden warriors in a ghostly manner, slaughtering a path through them as he moved closer and closer towards Ji Ning and Su Youji.

“He’s too fast! How is he this fast?” Ji Ning was shocked. “He must’ve used some sort of special divine ability. Even though the five types of lightning are slowing him down, he’s still faster than me! He’s also incredibly agile.”

World God Darkfall was moving in an almost serpentine fashion as he dodged past the many enemy attacks. He continued to slaughter a path through the golden warriors as he moved closer and closer to Ning’s side.

“Of the servants under my command, Darkfall is the fastest and most agile. He’s completely capable of avoiding the golden warriors and moving to the other side of the arena.” The blood-robed youth, Arroyo, was watching with arms folded across his chest, a look of absolute confidence in his eyes. “So what if she has four golems? Soon, all of you will have to deal with attacks from both Darkfall as well as the golden warriors.”

The Samsara Grinders.

Whoosh.

World God Darkfall’s six arms were hacking away with his six mighty warblades. His warblades attacked with incredible speed and in an unpredictable manner.

“The Dao of the Saber?” Ning carefully watched the man fight. This was a World God of the Dao of the Saber.

World God Darkfall continued to press closer and closer towards them. Soon, he reached an area that was directly in front of Ning and the others. Elder God Wilddog sent mentally, “Master, we’re currently able to keep a tight defensive perimeter against these golden warriors, but if that World God attacks I don’t think we’ll be able to hold.”

“Leave it to me.” Ning stretched his hand out, allowing a blood-colored sword to appear within it.

“Haha, that puny Elder God actually took out his sword. Is he actually planning to attack? He really has quite some gall, even though he’s clearly suicidal!” The blood-robed youth laughed.

# Chapter 37: Yes, Master

“Maybe he really does want to die.” The golden-robed youth, Fukai, was watching from afar as well.

Atop the Samsara Grinders.

The three black golems continued to circle around Ji Ning and Su Youji, blocking all of the offending golden warriors. World God Darkfall had drawn very close to them, and his cold eyes were staring directly at the four golems and Ning himself. “This ant-like Elder God actually dares to draw his sword, as though he’s preparing to enter the fray? Mm. He should be Su Youji’s retainer. Logically speaking, a single Elder God shouldn’t make any difference at all in a battle like this, and yet Su Youji permitted him to take part. There has to be a trap.”

“This puny Elder God probably has some sort of self-sacrificial suicide attack,” World God Darkfall mused to himself.

The endless primordial chaos was filled with untold mysteries. As Darkfall saw it, given that the Flamefairy was capable of producing those four black golems and that lightning gourd, she must have encountered a stroke of tremendous karmic fortune. Perhaps she had some other dangerous toys hidden up her sleeve as well.

“Unfortunately, Su Youji, you are a new Chaos Immortal and have no idea how great the power disparity is between an Elder God and a master-class World God. No matter what type of treasure you gave him, he still won’t pose a threat to me.” Many thoughts flitted through Darkfall’s mind, but he didn’t slow down in the slightest as he charged straight towards one of the black golems.

This black golem’s claw-techniques were clearly based off the mysteries of the Dao of Fire. World God Darkfall was instantly able to identify this particular golem as being the one which Su Youji was commanding.

“Once Su Youji dies, all of this will be over.” Right now, Darkfall had just one target: Su Youji!

“DARKFALL!”

A thunderous shot.

Ji Ning had been standing within the protective encirclement of the three black golems, the blood-colored Violetjewel in his hands. The pair of Thunderlight Wings suddenly appeared on his back as he instantly shot out in a streak of light, charging out of the protective encirclement and towards World God Darkfall.

“Eh?” World God Darkfall laughed when he saw this. Still, since he was worried that Ning might try to pull some sort of suicide attack or trap against him, he remained slightly on his guard. One of his six blades howled through the air in an illusory fashion as he released hundreds of streaks of saber-light towards Ning.

Because they were fighting atop the Samsara Grinders, World God Darkfall didn’t dare to transform his warblades and make them thousands of meters long. This was because if he did so, he would instantly have to deal with a hundred times more golden warriors than he was dealing with before. Even though he was a master-class World God, he would still be utterly demolished and killed by them.

Thus, everyone present including Ji Ning, World God Darkfall, and the golems all kept their weapons to a maximum size of just a few meters long. That way, only a comparatively low number of golden warriors would be able to assault them at any given moment.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Hundreds of streaks of saber-light flew towards Ning, but most of them actually landed upon the golden warriors who were charging towards Darkfall. Still, a portion of them ended up flying towards Ning.

“Hmph. He’s nothing more than an Elder God, while I’m a master-class World God. Any casual blow from my saber would be more than enough to wipe him out. You might have some powerful techniques up your sleeve, but if I don’t let you get close to me there’s nothing you can do.” World God Darkfall felt quite confident in his abilities, but he continued to keep a close eye on Ning’s actions. He wanted to watch as Ning died.

BOOM!

The Thunderlight Wings trembled as Ning charged straight towards Darkfall in an utterly ferocious manner.

"You think you can bar my path with those puny little blades of light?" Ning wasn't worried in the slightest. Sword-light flashed in his hands and effortlessly chopped apart the incoming streaks of saber-light.

"What?!"

"How can this be?"

"This Elder God..."

World God Darkfall wasn't the only one who was shocked. Even the blood-robed Arroyo and the gold-robed Fukai, along with their World God servants, were stunned. Although Darkfall had sent out those chops of saber-light in a rather casual manner, he was still a master-class World God who walked the path of the Dao of the Saber! Not even elite World Gods should be able to deflect his blows in such a casual manner.

"Ji Ning was... was this powerful?" World God Dragonbinder was stunned by what he saw as well. When Ning dueled against the World-level experts of the Badlands Court, he had only competed in sword-arts. He had never gone all-out and so the disciples of the Badlands Court had no idea as to exactly how powerful Ning was.

"How can an Elder God be this powerful?" The blood-robed Arroyo was absolutely stunned.

"What a monster. I simply must enslave him and take him for my own." The golden-robed youth, Fukai, stared at Ning with a gleaming look in his eyes. He didn't give a damn about whether Darkfall would die or not, as Darkfall was his foe's subordinate. He actually hoped Darkfall would die faster!

"Not good." Darkfall was completely stunned by this. Only now did he realize that there was no so-called 'suicide attack'. This Elder God was just an absolute monster, a freak with incredible power who was capable of battling against him in close combat.

“How could a monster like him have chosen to become Su Youji’s retainer...”

“WAIT!”

“I was wrong!” The three-eyed man himself had told them that Su Youji had made her breakthrough to become a Chaos Immortal just a few months ago. In other words, a year ago she was nothing more than an Ancestral Immortal. Given how ridiculously, monstrously powerful this Elder God was...

“There was no way he had been Su Youji’s retainer. Su Youji had to be his retainer!”

World God Darkfall was no fool. As soon as Ning revealed a hint of his true power, Darkfall immediately came to the correct conclusion.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Ning showed absolute valor and courage as he charged forward, sending golden warriors flying in every direction from his wake. Some were actually blasted into smithereens by his very charge itself. Ning’s sword-arts had become even more perfected than before. World God Darkfall was able to move past the golden warriors thanks to his tremendous speed and agility, but Ning was able to do the same by relying on his absolutely flawless sword-arts and the Soleheart stance.

“No matter how much of a monster you are, you are still just an Elder God. Die for me!” Darkfall let out a cold snarl as he pounced towards Ning.

To be beaten into a retreat by an Elder God would be a true humiliation!

“You aren’t good enough.” Ning instantly met him mid-blow.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Sword-light and saber-light clashed numerous times in the air, generating powerful booms with each collision. The saber-light was rather fluid and unpredictable while the sword-light thrummed with awesome power.

World God Darkfall's agility and speed were both utterly astonishing, far superior to that of most master-class World Gods. However, his saber-arts were a bit lacking in comparison. In fact, they were considerably weaker than Ning's sword-arts. Thankfully for Darkfall, his advantage in speed and agility allowed him to cover up his flaws and seek out Ning's.

Ning used just a single sword, but by relying on the [Heartsword Realm] he was able to deliver awe-inspiring attacks that gave World God Darkfall no chance to defeat him at all.

"Impossible. How can he possibly withstand my attacks?" World God Darkfall began to panic.

"The Dao of the Sword?"

"He's actually every bit the match of Darkfall in a head-on collision." The watchers, Arroyo and Fukai included, felt their hearts quiver. These two in particular were the favored sons of heaven and were every bit as talented as the Starlord of Fogstone had been. In fact, they had greater strokes of karmic fortune and were more powerful than the Starlord was. This naturally meant that they had far broader visions than most people... and yet, even they felt utterly speechless when they saw this Elder God fight a master-class World God to a standstill.

"He's an utter monster."

"What a complete freak..."

"Hurry over here! Assist me in surrounding and killing this World God Darkfall," Ning roared loudly.

"Yes, Master."

"Yes, Master."

"Yes, Master."

"Yes, Master."

The four golems all assented in unison. The three black golems began to advance while spinning together like a whirlpool, grinding apart and blasting away all the golden warriors who assailed them. As for the stone

titan named Rocky, he helped deal with any of the stragglers who made it through the initial defensive perimeter.

“He really is the true master.”

“This Elder God is the real person in charge.”

Everyone present felt stunned at the thought that they actually had the chance to witness such a peerless monster in action. Individuals like Ji Ning only existed in legends, and it was almost impossible to actually encounter one of them in the flesh. Encountering someone like Ji Ning was far more difficult than encountering a Samsara Daolord!

When the spirit of the Ten Thousand Mountains Formation saw Ning break through all nine barriers through raw force, it came to understand how much of a monster Ning was and thus it gifted him with a powerful legacy. The technique he had given was one of the nine mighty secret arts possessed by Daolord Allgod, the Novessence Thunder technique. This was a secret art which even Samsara Daolords would go mad over. The reason the spirit had given Ning the technique was because he had seen a faint sliver of a chance that Ning would one day reach the same level as Daolord Allgod. Although the chance was quite small, at least there was a chance.

Daolord Allgod was a Samsara Daolord but was able to hunt down Eternal Emperors.

When he was an Elder God, he was naturally just as much of a monster, if not more so! If you started far behind everyone else, you’d have even less of a chance of surpassing them in the future. Still, as far as the spirit of the Ten Thousand Mountains Formation was concerned, Ji Ning had just a tiny chance of actually reaching Daolord Allgod’s level. Over the course of these countless years, he had seen more than ten such peerless geniuses and had handed them quite a few legacies, but the most dazzling performer to date was just Daolord Badlands.

Yes, Ji Ning might appear to have a strong start, but who knew how outstanding a figure he would be upon becoming a World God or becoming a Samsara Daolord? Each step taken by a Samsara Daolord

involved treading on the boundary between life and death. To even reach the Verge of the Daomerge was extremely difficult. Not even Daolord Badlands had reached the Verge yet.

"Not good!" World God Darkfall was shocked.

"If those four golems join forces with this monster in front of me, I'm going to be in big trouble." Darkfall began to panic.

# Chapter 38: A Trap

Rumble...

The three black golems and the stone titan worked together flawlessly, the three black golems circling around Rocky as the four slowly advanced through the golden warriors towards Ji Ning and Darkfall.

"I have to kill this monster of an Elder God before those four golems arrive." World God Darkfall could sense that this was an incredibly dangerous situation. His eyes flashed red and his attack patterns suddenly changed. Previously, he was trying to use his speed, agility, and unpredictable saber stances to find a flaw in Ning's attacks. Now, he entered a berserk state and began to unleash saber-arts that focused on overwhelming, dominating power!

Each of the six dazzling sabers carried enough power to hack apart a chaosworld. Limitless amounts of power permeated every single saber as they burst forth with explosive might.

Boom! Boom! Boom! One explosion after another rang out. Ning used the Eternal weapon in his hand to block each time, but he clearly seemed to be somewhat struggling.

"Right! What a fool I am! This monster of an Elder God has only been using a single sword this entire time. Clearly, his other weapons are significantly weaker. This sword is most likely an Eternal weapon." When World God Darkfall saw Ning begin to stagger, he couldn't help but feel overjoyed. "I have six blades but he only has one sword. He was able to easily defend against me when I focused on trying to find flaws in his swordplay, but when I go all-out and attack him with full force he won't be able to withstand my blows.

"It doesn't matter how tight your defensive swordplay is. As long as I keep hacking down upon you with my sabers, a flaw will be revealed."

Boom!

The two mighty Fiendgod Refiners exchanged hundreds of blows in an

instant. World God Darkfall could sense the specter of death looming over him and so began to furiously attack with all his might, making it very difficult for Ning to defend against him.

“An opening!” World God Darkfall’s eyes lit up. He finally saw a flaw in Ning’s defenses.

Whoosh.

World God Darkfall didn’t hesitate at all. As soon as he saw the opening, he delivered a strike with an icy-cold streak of saber-light. This streak of saber-light went straight through Ning’s defensive perimeter! As the saying goes, ‘when he is ill, go for the kill’! A single critical strike could completely change the entire nature of a duel, and so Darkfall quickly struck out with all five of his other swords at the same time.

“No...!” Ning blanched as he hurriedly tried to deflect, but alas, this single mistake resulted in a cascade of mistakes.

Boom! Boom!

Two streaks of saber-light slammed down upon Ning at virtually the same moment.

“Haha...” A look of delight flashed through Darkfall’s eyes... but it was then quickly replaced by a look of shock and rage.

When his sabers had landed against Ning and struck his arm, it was as though some sort of spring mechanism had been activated. When the armor absorbed the force of his blows, it seemed to briefly store it, then sent it right back at Darkfall at the exact same level of power.

It must be understood that World God Darkfall had poured every last scrap of his power into those two saber-blows, making them incredibly strong!

And yet, he was now caught completely offguard by this damage reflection. Two surges of utterly terrifying power had just been sent towards him from his two sabers!

BOOM!!!! The twin surges of obliterating power instantly blasted World

God Darkfall backwards.

Being prepared for an attack and being unprepared for an attack... the results would be completely different!

This was true even for mortals. If he saw that someone was about to push him and prepared himself, he would at most stumble a few steps backwards. But if he was caught completely offguard and was ‘ambushed’ by the push, he might be instantly pushed down onto the ground! Even powerful experts could be slain by weaker opponents who managed to catch them offguard through a sneak attack!

This was the difference between being prepared and being unprepared.

“Die!”

Ning had clearly been struck twice, but he was only knocked a few steps backwards. Every step he took caused the entire Samsara Grinders to shudder, and as he did so he suddenly struck out with his Eternal weapon. Violetjewel instantly increased to become three hundred meters long, and as soon as World God Darkfall was knocked flying backwards Ning chopped at him with Violetjewel!

World God Darkfall had no choice but to frantically position his warblades in front of him to block.

BOOM!!!

He had already been knocked into the air; now, he was sent smashing into the ground by the force of Ning’s sword-blow.

This strike of Ning’s had made his situation go from bad to worse!

“It was a trap.” Darkfall instantly realized this.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! This entire time, the golden warriors had been assaulting both sides with no luck. However, almost all of them began throwing out ropes towards World God Darkfall. In the moment that Darkfall had been sent tumbling to the ground, two ropes had already tightened around his legs. He roared as he furiously struggled to break free, trying to use his warblades to hack the ropes apart and regain his

freedom.

He knew very well that if he couldn't break free, he would die.

"Useless." Ning watched from afar, occasionally flicking out Violetjewel to attack the nearby golden warriors.

"He lost?" The blood-robed Arroyo could hardly believe this was happening. Alas, when he saw Darkfall be smashed to the ground and a rope snake around his legs, Arroyo knew that his retainer had lost.

The golden warriors were an extremely dangerous part of the Samsara Grinders matches.

Master-class World Gods could withstand them, but once any additional variables were introduced (such as being knocked to the ground) even they would be thrown into grave peril. In a situation like this, their chances of surviving would rapidly slip away and death would be nigh! The countless golden warriors, all of whom had reached the World threshold of power, wouldn't give you any chance to recover at all.

"He was actually defeated by an Elder God." The golden-robed Fukai also stared at Ji Ning, located atop that distant Samsara Grinders. Although he was very proud, he sensed that Ji Ning could potentially pose a huge threat to him in the future. He knew that if this Elder God continued to grow, he would definitely surpass both Arroyo and Fukai himself.

"Screw off! Break!"

World God Darkfall fought hard to break free, but it was useless. When a second rope coiled around his body, it became even harder for him to try and fight back. More and more ropes coiled around him, causing a look of despair to appear in his eyes. He turned his gaze towards the distant Elder God Ji Ning, then let out a low growl. "A trap. It was a trap. Just one mistake..."

Ning stood there, the four golems circling around him and protecting him, stopping the golden warriors from getting close to him.

It had indeed been a trap. Strictly speaking, it wasn't even that clever of a trap. Then again, when experts fought in a duel to the death there was

no time to set up particularly intricate schemes. They would at most be able to set up a few small tricks to entrap their foes.

As soon as Ning had started to fight against World God Darkfall, he had immediately realized that actually killing his foe would be quite difficult. Both of them were roughly on par with each other in power. Even if the four golems came to assist, given how fast and agile Darkfall was he would've been able to easily bypass the golden warriors and flee from them.

Thus, Ning had deliberately said aloud, "Hurry over here! Assist me in surrounding and killing this World God Darkfall."

This order was meant to be heard by Darkfall. Darkfall had naturally started to panic upon hearing it. He could flee, but what good would that do? He had to win this match and so he had naturally launched increasingly furious attacks to try and speed this up.

At that moment, Ning had deliberately revealed a tiny opening. Darkfall hadn't suspected a thing.

He had fallen hook, line, and sinker!

Ning had spent 690 cubes of chaos nectar to purchase this Primalwater Armor during the treasure auction. When its damage reflection property was activated it had sent two incredibly powerful surges of power back towards World God Darkfall, catching him completely off his guard. He had suffered greatly from this attack! In truth, Primalwater Armor normally wasn't as effective as this, and people who were prepared for it wouldn't suffer quite this match. Ning, for example, had known exactly what was going to happen!

Although he had been struck twice, he had merely stumbled back by two steps. Knowing this was going to happen, he immediately struck out with a critical strike from his sword, slamming it against the already airborne World God Darkfall and sending him crashing to the ground.

His final strike was the straw that broke the camel's back!

When Darkfall was knocked down to the ground and the countless

golden warriors began to swarm him, his fate was virtually sealed. Only a stroke of absolutely incredible luck would've allowed him to escape this dire predicament. Alas, his luck wasn't good enough.

Whoosh. A golden warrior who held a gourd in his hands sucked Darkfall inside the gourd, then ground him to dust.

Even as Darkfall was being drawn into the gourd, he continued to stare unblinkingly at Ji Ning.

Ji Ning just calmly looked back at him.

In the end, one of them had to die. There were no other options.

"The third match has concluded." The bald three-eyed man's voice rang out, causing all of the golden warriors to halt and then disappear.

Ning waved his hand as well, putting away the three golems. Su Youji appeared in her true form as well.

"Let's go." Ning and Su Youji transformed into streaks of light, flying off of the Samsara Grinders.

All of the cultivators atop the great plaza had fallen silent. Even Arroyo and Fukai, two incredibly experienced figures who had previously held Ning in no regard, were silent. They stared at Ji Ning and Su Youji as the two flew off of the Samsara Grinders... or to be precise, they stared at Ji Ning.

"I am Arroyo!" The blood-robed youth, Arroyo, stared at Ning as he spoke. "Tell me your name."

Ning smiled. "Arroyo, you should spend your time worrying about your next match on the Samsara Grinders. You will probably be next."

# Chapter 39: Arroyo

The faces of Arroyo and Fukai both tightened as they turned to glance at each other.

True enough.

Three of the five matches had concluded, with just two more to go. Although this freakishly strong Elder God was worthy of their attention, what really mattered was still the divine blood of the Eternal. In the end, the two figures who had the greatest chances of acquiring the Eternal blood were Arroyo and Fukai. They no longer paid any attention to Ji Ning, who simply chuckled as he and Su Youji walked back to World God Dragonbinder's side.

"Brother Ji Ning, you hid your true power quite deeply," World God Dragonbinder sent mentally to Ning.

"Please pardon me, brother Dragonbinder," Ning said.

"Haha, I understand." Dragonbinder chuckled. His comment was just a casual throwaway comment with no real blame attached. He understood Ning's predicament. As the saying went, a large tree attracted the most wind! It was even more important for freakishly powerful Elder Gods like Ning to keep a low profile. Unless absolutely necessary, they wouldn't let others know of their true strength! The only reason why Ning had revealed it today was because he had no choice.

World God Dragonbinder now viewed Ning in a completely different light. In the past, he had treated Ning as he would an equal due to his ties to Daolord Solesky. However, now that he knew exactly how freakishly strong Ning was, Dragonbinder truly wanted to befriend him. Ning was still merely an Elder God, but he was already Dragonbinder's equal in power. How much more powerful would he become in the future?

"Your true abilities have been revealed. You have to be careful after you leave the Allgod Estate. I can sense that Arroyo and Fukai are incredibly dangerous. They somehow managed to convince even supreme World Gods to be their servants! This is truly unbelievable. They have to have a

shockingly powerful backer,” Dragonbinder sent mentally. “They might take an unsavory interest in you.”

Ning nodded slowly.

It was true.

Arroyo and Fukai had stated earlier that the three members who had taken part in the matches thus far were the weakest members of their two groups. The remaining four were all supreme World Gods! Fukai and Arroyo were both supreme World Gods and they each had a supreme World God retainer. It was truly unfathomable for a person to be willing to subordinate himself to be a servant of someone who was merely his equal.

“My sword-arts are just a hair away from breaking through. I need to try my best to become a World God here in the Allgod Estate,” Ning mused to himself.

Once this affair was included, it was highly possible that Arroyo or Fukai would try to capture Ning and force him to become a slave!

He was still a bit too weak right now. After he broke through to become a World God, he would truly have nothing to fear.

“It is now time for the fourth match.” The bald three-eyed man’s voice was filled with a hint of mocking as he turned his gaze towards Arroyo and Fukai.

“You!” The three-eyed man pointed straight at the blood-robed Arroyo.

Arroyo’s face tightened slightly. It was finally his turn... but who would his opponent be? Arroyo turned to glance at the gold-robed Fukai as well as the swarthy, withered-looking man standing behind him.

“And... you!” The three-eyed man pointed towards that swarthy, withered-looking man.

“Buxin.” Fukai sent a mental message to his servant.

“Master.” The withered man respectfully acknowledged him.

“You should know quite well how incredibly important the Eternal blood

is to me. If I cannot acquire it, I will definitely die... and you will die with me. In fact, even your entire school will be doomed. I think you know how angry my father will be if I die," Fukai sent mentally.

World God Buxin's pupils contracted slightly.

Fukai's father was a true devil amongst devils, an utterly terrifying figure. It would be easy for him to annihilate Buxin's school.

"But if I successfully acquire the Eternal blood, my status and power shall skyrocket! However, my greatest obstacle right now is Arroyo. If you can kill him, I'll be the one to acquire the Eternal blood. I can promise you right now that I will bestow a Pseudo Samsara Pill upon you, and your sect will also receive my eternal protection!" Fukai sent mentally.

"Don't worry, Master. Buxin will do his absolute best," World God Buxin sent mentally.

"I don't want you to your best. I want you to kill Arroyo! If I fail and die, you'll die as well since you are my servant. I know that you will work hard, but you also need to be smart about this. Find a way to kill him!" Fukai gritted his teeth, then took out a jade green globe. "I'm willing to temporarily loan this treasure of mine to you."

When the nearby Arroyo saw Fukai take out that jade green globe, his face tightened.

"Let me warn you..." The three-eyed man suddenly said, "All treasures, golems, bugbeasts, seals, and even Elder God servants can only be used a single time on the Samsara Grinders! You are forbidden from using them twice! If you give your servant a treasure, you are not permitted to use it for yourself!"

"What?! Why?" The gold-robed Fukai was shocked. "You never mentioned this before."

"Because no one tried to lend someone else a treasure." The three-eyed man said calmly, "I've already said what I need to say. Decide whether or not you wish to loan him that treasure."

"Ahahaha..." The blood-robed Arroyo let out a loud laugh. "Fukai, go

ahead and loan it to your servant... if you have the balls to, that is!"

The gold-robed Fukai hesitated for a moment, then turned to look at his servant. "It'll all be up to you."

"Understand, Master." World God Buxin nodded.

His master, Fukai, would take part in the fifth match. If that precious Eternal treasure could only be used in a single match on the Samsara Grinders, there was no way Fukai would loan it to him!

Whoosh. Whoosh.

Two figures flew straight towards the Samsara Grinders. The blood-robed Arroyo and the withered-looking World God Buxin stared at each other from afar as the light around them began to coalesce into those golden armored warriors. These two supreme World Gods didn't even blink, paying no attention whatsoever to the golden warriors.

"You think yourself worthy of facing me?" Arroyo had a look of ridicule in his eyes.

"Arroyo, on this day, either you or I will perish here atop this Samsara Grinders. I have no choice but to offend you." World God Buxin's voice was very calm and flat. Arroyo had an exalted background and his status was slightly higher than even Fukai's, but they were more or less on the same level. Buxin and Arroyo were both supreme World Gods, but their statuses were completely different.

Neither side could afford to fail in this quest for the Eternal blood. World God Buxin was going to have to fight with his full power.

"Begin!" The three-eyed man ordered.

"Kill!"

"Kill!"

Thousands of golden warriors let out furious roars as they charged straight towards Arroyo and World God Buxin.

"Heh heh heh..." Arroyo laughed coldly as waves of blood suddenly manifested around him. The waves of blood spread out in every direction,

smashing into those golden warriors. Some of the warriors were actually shattered by the waves while the rest were pushed far away.

Arroyo waved his hand, and nine mighty golems appeared in the area around him. Each of the nine golems had auras of incredible power, and they were clearly even stronger than the golems which Ning had purchased.

"You are doomed." An enormous pair of scimitars suddenly appeared within Arroyo's hands. The scimitars were simply huge, larger than even Arroyo himself. Both emanated auras of utterly shocking power and were clearly Eternal weapons.

Arroyo strode forward confidently. The waves of blood continued to push outwards, preventing the golden warriors from even moving close to him, while his nine golems surrounded him like an honor guard escorting an emperor.

"What incredible power." Ning was shocked by what he saw. The blood waves alone were so powerful that they were perhaps superior to most master-class World Gods in might. Those two weapons Arroyo were wielding were most likely Eternal weapons as well. Once he attacked, he would definitely be able to unleash the power of a supreme World God.

And most likely, he would be an incredibly strong one, superior to other supreme World Gods such as God Emperor Blacklotus.

"Even World God Northrest only had access to one Eternal weapon, but both of Arroyo's scimitars appear to be Eternal weapons. And those nine golems surrounding him... I imagine every single one of them has to be worth over a thousand cubes of chaos nectar. Given that they are able to join together into a formation, the entire set has to be worth tens of thousands of cubes."

Ning was shocked by Arroyo's wealth. He now felt a sense of pressure. Just as Dragonbinder had warned him, it was very likely that either Fukai or Arroyo would try to capture him after these trials were concluded. They would want to force Ning to become a servant or a slave.

The terrifying power which Arroyo had just put on display would be

turned against Ning. Would Ning be able to handle it?

And then there was Fukai, someone who was just as terrifying as Arroyo himself...

Boom! Boom! Boom! World God Buxin calmly walked forward, having manifested a total of eighteen arms. These eighteen arms were unleashing a series of palm-arts and fist-arts, and each time they struck a golden warrior the golden warrior would be smashed into tiny pieces. He just calmly walked forward through the sea of golden armored foes towards Arroyo.

Both sides completely ignored the golden warriors. They only had eyes for each other.

Only one of the two would survive!

# Chapter 40: Close the Gates

The battle between Arroyo and World God Buxin went on for nearly an entire hour. Finally, the battle came to an end.

"Impossible. How could this have happened?" The golden-robed Fukai was muttering to himself, a look of disbelief in his eyes. He truly couldn't believe what he had just seen.

"How could this have happened? Is this... is this my destiny? My doom?" Fukai felt his entire body turn as cold as ice.

Ji Ning, World God Dragonbinder, Su Youji had already safely secured victory in their match. Although they were quite curious about this 'Eternal blood', it wasn't something which they absolutely had to acquire. Thus, they had been watching the fourth match quite calmly.

"Huh. So that happened." World God Dragonbinder was still rather stunned.

"Impressive." Ning sighed in amazement.

"Master, would he now be considered a transcendent figure amongst World Gods?" The Flamefairy asked.

Ning nodded slowly. "I think he should be."

The battle had been utterly exhilarating.

As World God Buxin entered the battlefield, his power actually began to increase! He used his fists and his feet as his weapons, and when his eighteen arms struck out they formed an inviolable domain that swept away any who sought to breach it. All nine of Arroyo's golems had been somewhat suppressed by him! Fukai had been incredibly excited upon seeing this as nothing would have made him happier than seeing Arroyo die.

"Arroyo really did have quite a few treasures. He used up so many treasures that he was able to buy himself a considerable amount of time. In the end, just as he was about to lose, he went completely berserk and actually made a breakthrough. He became much more powerful as a

result." Ning still couldn't get that dazzling saber-strike out of his mind. Gripped by utter despair, Arroyo released an utterly dazzling strike with his saber that suddenly exploded with unbelievable power. That strike had completely knocked Buxin off his feet and had sent him flying backwards.

Arroyo had been wildly overjoyed. He had struck out two more times, causing World God Buxin to tumble down to the ground. The golden warriors had seized the moment to tie him up with his ropes, and shortly afterwards he was drawn into one of their gourds and grind apart into dust.

"The fourth match ended," the bald three-eyed man announced. Even he couldn't help but give the blood-robed Arroyo a glance. Transcendent World Gods were incredibly rare. Any master-class World God who acquired an Eternal weapon or some incredibly powerful treasures would possess the power of a supreme World God, but to transcend past the supreme level was incredibly difficult.

One had to reach an incredibly high level of skill in a certain aspect in order to become a transcendent World God. These figures were incredibly rare! The number of transcendent World Gods in the entire Badlands Territory could be counted on one hand. They were just as rare as Samsara Daolords!

"Ahaha! I won! I WON! Ahaha..."

Arroyo flew downwards alongside his servants, a look of crazed joy and excitement on his face. The blood sea hidden within his eyes seemed to be roaring and shaking.

"Fukai. Your servant really was quite impressive. He actually forced me to the utter brink. Haha! I really need to find a way to thank him. If it hadn't been for him forcing me to the brink of utter despair, I never would've been able to comprehend the true essence of the 'Sanguine Decay'." Arroyo was filled with smugness as he stared at the gold-robed Fukai. "Fukai, if you can't accept this outcome, make your own breakthrough as well! That way, you'd also become a transcendent figure..."

Arroyo was filled with complete confidence now. “You’ve lost. You’ve utterly lost. The divine blood of the Eternal is mine.”

“My match hasn’t even started. You are celebrating too soon.” A gloomy look was on Fukai’s face as he spoke.

“Look at how unhappy you are! This is the first time I’ve seen you with such an ugly look on your face.” Arroyo snickered loudly.

Fukai had always looked completely calm, unflappable, and self-assured. Now, however, an extremely dark and gloomy look was on his face.

Fukai no longer had any confidence in his ability to win. To advance from being a supreme World God to become a transcendent one was an impossibly difficult step to take! However, Fukai still clung onto hope. “If Arroyo can make a breakthrough, why can’t I? I’ll definitely make a breakthrough as well. I’m going to acquire that Eternal blood, then become a Samsara Daolord. My path has just begun... I’m not going to be beaten. I’m not!”

“The fifth match.” The three-eyed man spoke out again. “It goes without saying that you two will be the ones to participate. That match just now was quite dazzling. It’s been a long time since I’ve seen a transcendent World God. Don’t let the final match be a disappointment.”

The blood-robed Arroyo laughed, while Fukai’s face turned serious.

“Go,” Arroyo ordered his subordinate. “Play with him a bit.”

“Understood.” Behind Arroyo was an alien creature who looked something like an ape. His entire body was covered with black fur and protected by a suit of golden armor. When he allowed his aura to spread out, it crashed out towards everyone else like waves slamming against the beach.

“Hmph.” Fukai let out a cold snort, then immediately transformed into a streak of light as he flew towards the Samsara Grinders.

“Die. The black-furred ape flew towards the Samsara Grinders as well, filled with a murderous aura.

Ning and the others continued to simply watch from below.

"That jade green globe actually held an army of bugbeasts inside of it." Su Youji sighed in amazement.

"He really had quite a few treasures." World God Dragonbinder couldn't help but speak out as well.

"Hah. Him and Arroyo are no ordinary World-level cultivators." Ning couldn't help but sigh. These guys were simply too rich. That jade green globe held an entire world within it that was exclusively devoted to rearing bugbeasts. The rules of the competition meant that only nine of the bugbeasts could be unleashed, but all nine were comparable to master-class World Gods who could give even Ning a run for his money!

It had been a truly wild battle.

Fukai had intentionally let himself fall into dangerous situations, hoping that the pressure of it all would result in him making a breakthrough.

Alas, breakthroughs weren't that easy to make. In addition, he very nearly died due to a dangerous situation he put himself into. In the end, he only survived because he used a Dao-seal.

The battle went on for four full hours.

"I've done everything I can, Master." The black-furred ape let out a low growl. The four hours of frenzied combat had completely wiped out his reserves of divine power.

"Die in peace. I'll protect your entire race." Arroyo smiled.

The battle came to an end.

The ape's divine power was completely used up, resulting in his death. Fukai was the victor! However, he didn't seem to be the slightest bit pleased by his victory. He put away his bugbeasts and flew off the Samsara Grinders in a rather numbed, dazed manner.

"Fukai." Arroyo looked at Fukai.

Fukai looked at him.

Their gazes met. One would acquire the Eternal blood and survive. The other would die.

"You lost," Arroyo said.

"N-no..." Fukai ground his teeth. He had won his match, but he had lost the competition between himself and Arroyo. Although he had intentionally let himself fall into dangerous situations, he hadn't made any breakthroughs at all! He knew very well that Arroyo was now far more powerful than him.

Daolord Allgod had established the trial of the Twin Samsara Heavens for anyone who sought to acquire Eternal blood. Given what a proud figure he was, it was guaranteed that everything would be happened in accordance with his will. There was no way that World God Dragonbinder, World God Boneplate, Flamefairy Su Youji, or Fukai would be the ones to earn the Eternal blood.

There was only one possible victor!

Arroyo!

Transcendent World Gods were incredibly rare. He, and he alone, was qualified to be considered the victor of this trial.

"The five matches have come to an end." The bald three-eyed man spoke out, causing everyone present to turn towards him.

"Five World-level cultivators remain." The three-eyed man swept his gaze across Arroyo, Boneplate, Fukai, Dragonbinder, and Su Youji. These five had survived; the other five had died.

"Eternal blood aside, all survivors will be given a bit of karmic good fortune." The three-eyed man smiled as he pointed towards the towering gates of the Castrum Divinitus.

Rumble...

These massive gates had been shut for countless years. They now slowly began to move, and it was like two giant continents were swinging open. Past the gates was utter darkness. Nothing could be seen at all.

“The survivors shall all be granted entry into the Castrum Divinitus, and all of you will benefit from it.” The three-eyed man turned to look at Fukai, Arroyo, and Boneplate. “The three of you experienced many dangers to reach this place. Even for those of you who do not acquire the Eternal blood, you will still be blessed with some karmic fortune.”

“As for you.” The three-eyed man turned to look at Dragonbinder, Su Youji, and Ji Ning. “I teleported all of you here against your will, then forced you to enter duels to the death. Since you have survived, I shall bless you with good fortune as well.”

“What about the Eternal blood?”

The blood-robed Arroyo said hurriedly, “I don’t care about other ‘fortunes’. I only care about the Eternal blood.”

“This group has performed excellently and is qualified to receive the Eternal blood,” the three-eyed man said. “However, you’ll only find out if you shall be the one to receive the Eternal blood after you enter the Castrum Divinitus. Each of you will be teleported to a different part of the Castrum Divinitus, with the victor being sent directly to the Eternal blood.”

“Why don’t you take it out right now?” Arroyo frowned. “Only five of the ten have survived! What, are you saying that it’s possible that someone besides me shall win the Eternal blood?”

Arroyo began to grow rather impatient.

The three-eyed man’s face turned cold as he said flatly, “The divine blood of the Eternal is incredibly precious. It is stored deep within the Castrum Divinitus, which is why the victor has to go in person to retrieve it. As for who that person is, you’ll know shortly.”

“Enough. All of you, get in.” The three-eyed man swept the cultivators with his gaze.

“Let’s go, let’s go.” World God Dragonbinder chortled merrily. “I’m not too ambitious and know my own limits. The Eternal blood isn’t for me. Still, to be blessed with some karmic fortune isn’t too shabby! Very few

will ever be able to even enter the core region of the Allgod Estate, the Castrum Divinitus.”

“Let’s go. If we refuse to enter, he’ll just grab us and forcibly throw us inside. I’d rather that not happen.” Ning and Su Youji walked inside as well.

“Hmph.” Fukai had a gloomy look on his face as he also passed through the gates of the Castrum Divinitus.

“I have faith.” Arroyo nodded. “I’m sure that the trials left behind by Daolord Allgod were fair ones and will be judged fairly.” The only reason why Arroyo had been quibbling was because he truly couldn’t afford to lose this trial.

In the end, all of them walked towards the Castrum Divinitus.

Whoosh. World God Dragonbinder was the first to step inside the castle. As soon as he took a single step into the endless darkness, he completely disappeared.

Ning and Su Youji twitched slightly when they saw this. The insides of the castle were pitch-black, and they couldn’t see a single thing within the darkness at all. As for coresense or heartforce, they naturally were completely ineffective here. Still, they understood that it would be very easy for Daolord Allgod to slay them if that was the goal. There was no need for any tricks or schemes.

“Let’s go in.” Ning and Su Youji both stepped into the Castrum Divinitus, disappearing into the endless darkness.

Fukai, Arroyo, and Boneplate all entered the Castrum Divinitus as well.

“Haha...”

“It is over.”

The bald three-eyed man waved his hand, causing the Samsara Grinders to shrink as it flew back into his hands.

“Close the gates!” The three-eyed man laughed merrily.

Rumble...

The massive, towering gates of the Castrum Divinitus rumbled shut.

# Credits

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